

# Junior History of Methodism

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1922



THE OLD RIGGING LOFT  
Where Captain Webb and Embury Preached

W. G. KOONS



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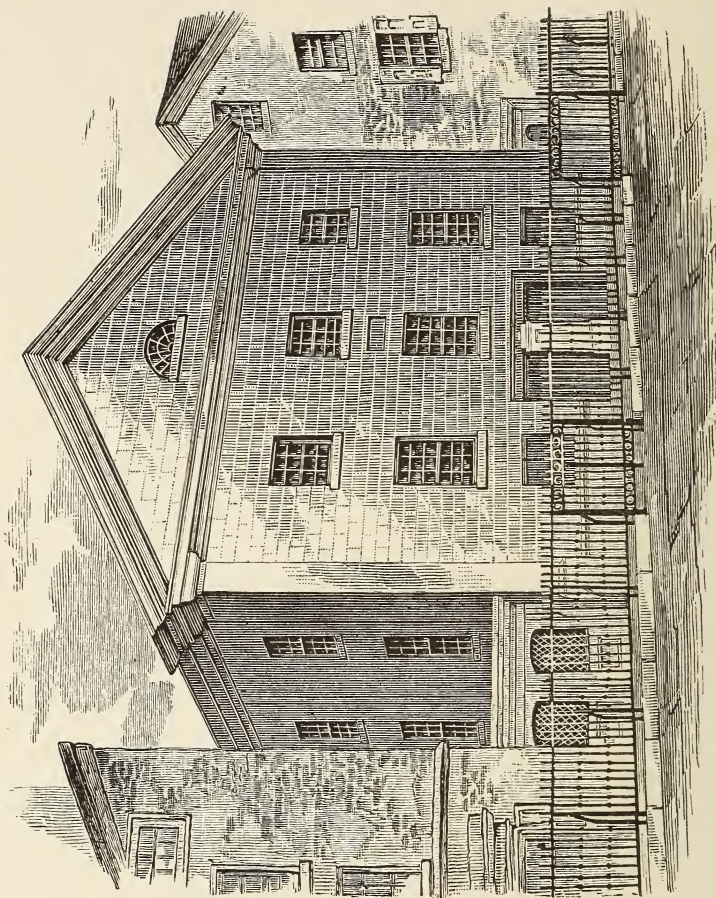
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ST. GEORGE'S CHURCH, PHILADELPHIA, THE OLDEST METHODIST  
CHURCH EDIFICE IN AMERICA

# JUNIOR HISTORY OF METHODISM

FOR YOUNG PEOPLE  
STUDY CLASSES IN EPWORTH LEAGUE  
AND THE GENERAL READER

BY  
WILLIAM G. KOONS

WITH AN INTRODUCTION BY  
DAVID G. DOWNEY



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## PREFACE TO SECOND EDITION

THE study of Methodist history has a practical value. It does not merely result in church pride, but brings to the student spiritual lessons in practical life form. The person who has not a reasonable knowledge of Methodist history has missed a means of grace. The faith, joyous experience, evangelistic zeal, and consecrated lives of our Methodist fathers are contagious.

This booklet was written as a textbook for use in the senior grade of the Junior Epworth League, and for study classes of the Senior Chapter. The author so used it, before publication, with gratifying results. The illustrations, the size, the price, and the questions adapt it to such use.

Best results demand at least three things: 1. A sufficient supply of the books. One for each student means much. 2. Intelligent sidelights by the teacher. A good plan is to go over the lesson the week previous to recitation, having the students read a paragraph each. 3. Honest effort on the part of the student.

This brief work is also adapted to the general reader. Many Methodists, young and old, have never read any general history of their church. The busiest may read this one. It may be intelligently read through in four hours.

The reception and use of the first edition was most gratifying, and this second edition is sent on its mission with a prayer that it may contribute its mite in training our young people to be intelligent, loyal Christians and Methodists.

W. G. KOONS.

Rising Sun, Maryland, March 1, 1922.





## INTRODUCTION

NOTHING is more interesting or illuminating than history. Methodist history is especially full of interest and romance. American Methodism had its beginnings in our colonial days, and its formal organization was perfected only eight years after the Declaration of Independence. The Methodist Fathers were contemporary with the founders of the Republic. In all struggles for independence and for the integrity and expansion of the nation, the people called Methodists have had an inspiring part. No young person can thoroughly understand the deep currents of American life without an adequate knowledge of Methodist History.

This little volume is intended simply as a beginning book for Juniors in our Epworth Leagues and Sunday Schools. It is well adapted to its purpose. If properly studied and taught it will create in our young people an appetite for further historical reading. The Junior who masters this little work will be well fitted to enjoy Abel Stevens' Histories of Methodism and of the Methodist Episcopal Church—books which are far more fascinating and entertaining than many much praised modern romances.

DAVID G. DOWNEY.



## CHAPTER I

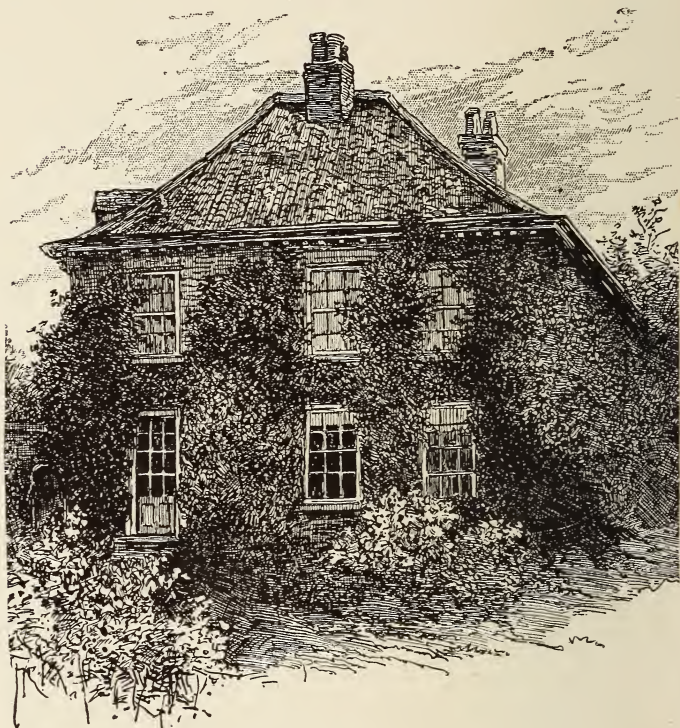
### THE CRADLE OF METHODISM

THE place of our birth has much to do with our after history. Methodism was fortunate in being born in the sturdy English nation. To properly understand the early days of Methodism we must know something about the religious history of that people. Now look carefully at this cradle.

England received the gospel about the middle of the second century, or about one thousand five hundred years before Methodism was born. After the Pope of Rome began to exercise his undue authority over the churches he sent Augustine to establish his rule over the English Church. This was so well done that for nearly one thousand years the Roman Catholic Church had no more loyal subjects than among the English. But a purer form of Christianity came in 1534, when Protestantism was introduced, during the reign of King Henry VIII.

But Protestantism itself as it existed in England was a very poor type of Christianity. During the long period from Henry VIII to John Wesley—nearly two hundred years—the church had better doctrines and government, but there was still a lack of heart piety and pure, Christ-like living. Morality throughout England continued to decline. The reign of Queen Anne, who took the throne in 1702, one year before John Wesley was born, is famous for its wickedness. The queen herself was corrupt, the court polluted, and society baneful. Infidelity was rampant. Drunkenness and gambling were common pastimes. The learning of the age, with Oxford University at its head, was strongly tainted with infidelity.

A very able treatise by R. Barclay on *Religious Society of the Times of the Commonwealth* says, "The darkest period of the religious annals of England was that prior to the preaching of Whitefield and the Wesleys."



EPWORTH RECTORY

The Bishop of Litchfield in 1724 wrote: "The Lord's Day is now the devil's market day. More lewdness, more drunkenness, more quarrels and murders, more sin of every kind, is contrived and committed on this day of

the week than on all the others put together. Every kind of sin has found a writer to defend and teach it, and a bookseller and hawker to divulge and spread it."

The church was inactive and powerless. Its ministers were ignorant, worldly, and also frequently the leaders at cards and in drinking-houses, blind leaders of the blind. This condition of things made a change necessary for the life of the church and of the nation. This necessity was met by the birth of Methodism. Such was the cradle into which Methodism was born. She proved herself a wonderful babe by arising and transforming her cradle.

#### QUESTIONS

1. In what nation was Methodism born?
2. In what century was Christianity introduced into England?
3. When was Protestantism introduced?
4. What was the condition of the church and clergy in England at the time of Wesley's birth?
5. Why was Methodism a wonderful babe?

## CHAPTER II

### ANCESTORS OF THE WESLEYS

A LIFE of John Wesley by the Rev. J. H. Overton, recent rector of Epworth, the Wesley home, says that the founder of Methodism, John Wesley, "was of gentle birth on both sides. The Wesleys were an ancient family, settled in the west of England from the time of the Conquest. The Annesleys, his mother's family, were an equally ancient and respected stock."

John Wesley in middle life declared that what he knew of his ancestry went no farther back "than a letter written by his grandfather's father to her he was to marry." The writer of this letter was Bartholomew Wesley, a preacher of the Church of England—as was also his son John, the founder's grandfather. Among the sons of this John was Samuel Wesley, the father of the founder of Methodism.

Samuel Wesley was a man of great practical wisdom and piety. He manifested the strength of his character in his youth by walking from London to Oxford, and entering himself as a student in that great school, when he had only forty-five shillings in his pocket. He worked so faithfully and managed so well that he graduated in five years, with bills all paid and one hundred and fifty-five shillings in hand. He spent his life as a minister in the Church of England. He was rector at Epworth when John was born.

Samuel Wesley married Susannah Annesley, daughter of Dr. Samuel Annesley. Of Dr. Annesley it is said that he determined at six years of age to be a preacher, and soon afterward that he would read twenty chapters of



the Bible every day. From this habit he never departed. In Williams's biography of him it is related that he was able to endure the severest cold without hat, gloves, or fire; for years he drank nothing but water, and until death could read without glasses the finest print. Dr. Annesley



SUSANNAH WESLEY

was twice married, and was the father of one child by his first wife and of twenty-four by his second. Susannah, who became the wife of Samuel Wesley and mother of John, was the twenty-fifth child in this large family.

Of Susannah Wesley Dr. Adam Clarke says, "Such a woman, take her all in all, I have not heard of, I have not read of, nor with her equal have I been acquainted." Again, in his comments on the book of Proverbs, when he comes to that portion where Solomon describes the ideal woman, he mentions Mrs. Wesley as the best example he knew of the Scripture portrait. All accounts agree that she was a remarkable woman; beautiful in person, keen and strong in intellect, master of Greek, Latin, and French, devout in her religious life, spending an hour each evening and morning in private meditation and prayer, independent and firm in will. She was providentially fitted to become the mother of Methodism, and worthy of the title "saint," which we sometimes bestow upon her.

#### QUESTIONS

1. Give name of the founder of Methodism, and the name of his father.
2. At what place was Wesley's father rector when John was born?
3. Give name of Wesley's mother, and tell what you can about her.
4. Tell something about Wesley's father.
5. Tell something about the father of Mrs. Wesley.

## CHAPTER III

### WESLEY'S CHILDHOOD HOME

SAMUEL and Susannah Wesley were the parents of nineteen children, ten of whom lived to be full grown. Of these children two achieved world-wide fame. John Benjamin, the fifteenth child, was born June 17, 1703. He became the founder of Methodism. His middle name, "Benjamin," was never used by the family, and is not generally known, though from old records it is learned that he was so baptized, by his father, when a few hours old. Charles, the eighteenth child, was born December 18, 1708, and was therefore more than five years younger than John. Charles became the great hymn writer of Methodism.

The Epworth rectory was at once a home, a church, and a school. The first Junior Epworth League existed there. "Saint Susannah" was the first superintendent, and her nineteen children the charter members. Mrs. Wesley was the first teacher of her children. She kept them in her own rectory school until they were about ten years of age. Her sessions were from nine to twelve in the morning and from two to five in the afternoon, and were opened and closed with singing. The strictest rule and method were observed. A child was not taught its letters until it was five years old, and then the task was to be accomplished in one day, if possible. There were but two failures, and of them Mrs. Wesley said afterward, "I thought them very dull."

At the age of one year each child was taught to fear punishment and to cry softly. A child was never given

anything for which it cried. Children were never given anything to eat between meals. All were put to bed at eight o'clock. If a child did wrong, and confessed, no punishment was given. The girls were not taught to sew until they first learned to read well. "This rule," says Mrs. Wesley, "is to be observed, for the putting children to learn sewing before they can read perfectly is the very reason why so few women can read in a manner fit to be heard."

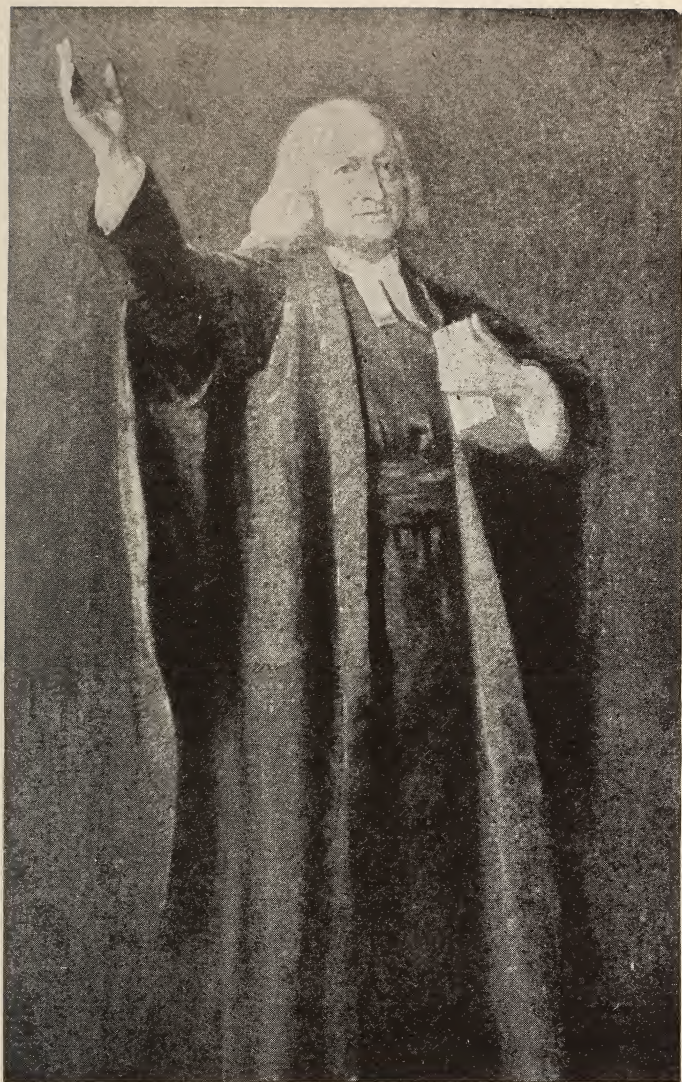
The religious training of the children was most carefully provided for. Besides the family altar the mother took each child alone for one hour every week for religious conversation and prayer. John's hour came each Thursday evening. When a graduate student in Oxford University he wrote to his mother, begging her to give him an hour of her thought and prayer every Thursday evening as she used to do when he was a boy at home.

John Wesley had a naturally devout and religious nature; of this Dr. J. M. Buckley says, in his splendid *History of Methodism*: "In this particular there is a similarity between the childhood of John Wesley and that of William E. Gladstone, who was also so devout in spirit that his father admitted him to the communion table when only eight years old."

John Wesley was preeminently the son of his mother. He inherited many of her traits, and between the two the closest affection and fellowship existed throughout life. It has been said by some that Methodism was born in the Holy Club at Oxford, others have located its birth in the little meeting where John Wesley felt his heart "strangely warmed." But it may be as truly said that it was born in the devout, systematic, prayerful training of her children by the mother in Epworth Rectory.

This model family was not without its trials; one





from the painting by J. W. L. Forster.

JOHN WESLEY

death after another occurred among the children. The father's salary, though set at £200, or \$1,000, was really only \$650. This was insufficient, and caused a constant battle with poverty. The rectory was twice set on fire by roughs, who were offended by the plain preaching of the rector. The first time the fire was discovered and put out, but in the second fire, February, 1709—when John was six years old—the rectory was destroyed with all its records. In the hurry of escape before the flames John was overlooked. When the rest of the family was safely out it was found that he was asleep upstairs. Then, almost frantic, the father ran to the stairs, only to find that they were consumed.

He fell on his knees in the hall and commended the soul of the child to God. In the meantime John had been awakened by the glaring light, and seeing that his escape by the door was impossible, he climbed upon a chest by the window and so became visible to the crowd below. No ladder being accessible, and the house low, one man standing upon the shoulders of another raised the window and rescued the child.

It was none too soon, for the roof that moment fell in. The grateful father called to the neighbors and said: "Let us kneel down; let us give thanks to God. He has given me all of my eight children; let the house go, I am rich enough." This incident made John a marked child. His mother so looked upon him, and devoted special pains to him. She wrote in her diary: "I do intend to be more particularly careful of the soul of this child. . . . Lord, give me grace, and bless my efforts with good success."

#### QUESTIONS

1. How many children had Samuel and Susannah Wesley?
2. What was John's full name?

3. Where did the first Junior League exist?
4. Give some of the rules followed by Mrs. Wesley in training her children.
5. How often was the rectory on fire; and how was John rescued from the last fire?



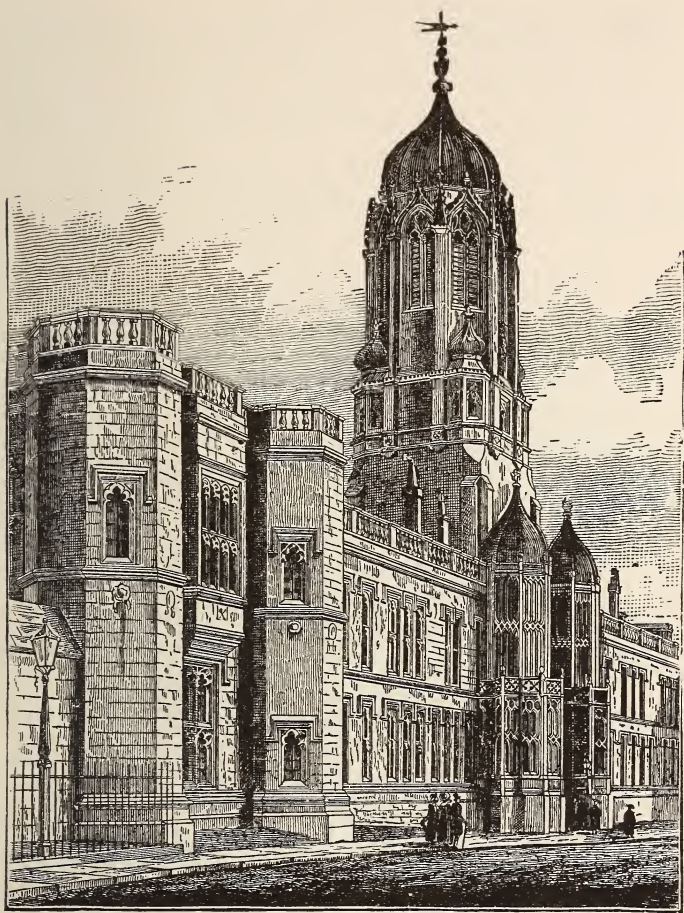
## CHAPTER IV

### OXFORD COLLEGE AND THE HOLY CLUB

JOHN WESLEY entered the famous Oxford University in 1720, being about seventeen years of age. His preparation for Oxford consisted of five years spent at the Charterhouse School, in London. Thus he left the parental home when eleven years of age. At the Charterhouse the students were poorly fed, and the larger boys imposed upon the smaller. In John's case they robbed him of his share of meat; so that many times he was compelled to live entirely on bread. Though so poorly fed, and extremely studious, he preserved his health by obeying a wise command of his father, to run around the large garden of the Charterhouse three times a day. In Oxford John Wesley obtained a high reputation for scholarship.

In August, 1727, he went to Epworth and was "curate," or helper to his father, until November, 1729. Here he perhaps would have remained many years had it not been for an urgent appeal from Oxford College requiring his presence as moderator, to preserve "order and good government." Heeding this call, Mr. Wesley came again to Oxford in November, 1729, and remained six years.

The "Holy Club" began in Oxford in 1729, just before John Wesley returned from Epworth. Charles Wesley was its prime mover. He had entered Oxford in 1726, when eighteen years of age. In his earlier life he had been somewhat careless in religious matters, but now began to be serious and to be regular in his church duties. He soon induced two other students to join him in this



WEST FRONT OF CHRIST CHURCH (OXFORD)

manner of life, Robert Kirkham and William Morgan. When John arrived from Epworth he became so eager in this manner of life that he was soon recognized as the

leader. They rose at five in the morning, fasted twice a week. They partook of the holy communion every Sunday. They repeated a prayer at nine, twelve, and three every day; and made a brief silent prayer every waking hour of the day.

This strictness and devotion in religious life soon won for them the title the "Holy Club." It was given them



QUADRANGLE OF LINCOLN COLLEGE (OXFORD)

in derision by the less devoted students. Because of their much reading of the Bible, they were sometimes called "Bible Bigots." But the name which has clung to them and their adherents is "The Methodists." Thus the name by which our denomination has always been known was first given to these devoted young students in derision.

Those already named were afterward joined by George Whitefield, James Hervey, and twelve others not named. Thus in this Holy Club were being prepared the three

chief actors in the origination of Methodism: here were John Wesley, its founder and powerful preacher; Charles Wesley, its seraphic hymn writer; and George Whitefield, its flaming evangelist. It was a marvelous thing for these young men to turn away from the frivolity of college life and meet together in a private room to sing, pray, study the Word of God, and try to build each other up in holiness.

John Wesley's life at this time is a fair sample of all the club. Dr. Buckley says of him at this period: "He observed the Wednesday and Friday fasts, tasting no food till three in the afternoon. He walked twenty-five miles a day, in hot weather as well as in cold, and frequently, with his brother, would read as they walked for a distance of ten or twelve miles. He and his colleagues carried asceticism and devotion to study so far as nearly to ruin their health. He set apart an hour or two every day for prayer . . . visited prisons, gave away all the money he could obtain, cut off not only the superfluities, but many things deemed by others necessities, until by failing health, and especially by severe and frequent hemorrhages, he was brought to the gates of death."

These extremes were soon corrected, but the motive back of them was commendable. The Holy Club in Oxford was the ripe fruit of the devoted religious training of Epworth Rectory, and also the fertile seed of Methodism throughout the world.

#### QUESTIONS

1. At what school did John Wesley prepare for college, and how did the boys treat him there?
2. To what famous college did John Wesley go when seventeen?
3. When, where, and by whom was the Holy Club formed?
4. Name its three most prominent members.
5. How did we get the name "Methodist"?

## CHAPTER V

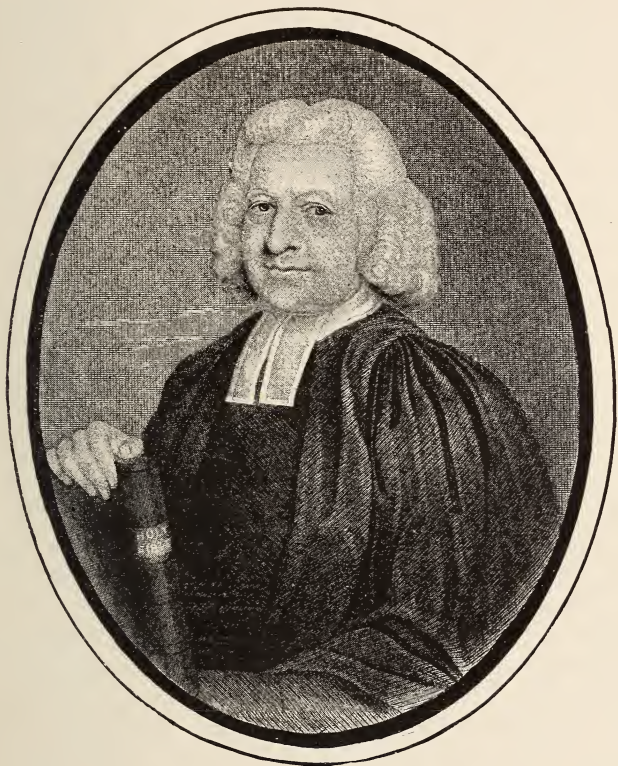
### THE WESLEYS IN AMERICA

AT this time in England a man could be imprisoned for debt and hung for stealing. Many were thrown into prison for small debts which they were trying honestly to pay. On an average four thousand were thus imprisoned each year. This state of things aroused the sympathy of James Oglethorpe, a member of the English Parliament, who planned to provide a place in America where the poor would be respected, and not be imprisoned for their poverty. June 9, 1732, George II, King of England, granted Oglethorpe what is now the State of Georgia for his colony, and in November of that year he brought over one hundred and twenty settlers.

In 1734 Oglethorpe returned to England, and in February, 1736, came again to the colony with three hundred more emigrants, among whom were John and Charles Wesley. John came as a missionary to the Indians, and Charles as secretary to General Oglethorpe. The voyage over had lasted nearly three months, and was beset by a terrific storm, during which it was feared the ship would be lost. John and Charles were greatly frightened, as were most of the others; but a company of Christians, called Moravians, were singing hymns of praise in the midst of the storm. After the storm John asked them how they kept so tranquil. They told him they knew they were saved and were not afraid to die. Mr. Wesley had no such experience, and doubted as to his having been converted.



The Wesleys remained in America about two years. John was much disappointed in not being able to preach to the Indians because of their language, and his ministry



CHARLES WESLEY

among the colonists was not very satisfactory. He was seeking a higher religious experience, but in a wrong way—by self-denial and self-persecution. He and his brother

Charles during their stay in America frequently slept on the ground, refused all food but bread and water; John even went barefoot, in a struggle for a satisfactory experience of religion.

This severe type of religion, lacking the sweetness of the gospel, drove the colonists away from Mr. Wesley and largely defeated his mission. If Mr. Wesley had found in Georgia the right path, as he afterward found it in England, Methodism would, in all probability, have been an American instead of an English product.

Mr. Wesley, still in doubt about his experience, went to Spangenberg, a Moravian preacher in Georgia, to inquire the best way to make his ministry a success. "My brother," said the Moravian, "I must first ask you one or two questions. Have you the witness within yourself? Does the Spirit of God bear witness with your spirit that you are a child of God?" Wesley made no answer and Spangenberg then asked, "Do you know Jesus Christ?" "I know he is the Saviour of the world," replied Wesley. "True," was the reply, "but do you know he saves you?" "I hope he has died to save me," replied Wesley. "Do you know for yourself?" was the final question. "I do," responded Wesley; but he afterward writes, "I fear they were mere words."

Mr. Wesley set sail for England January 22, 1738. On the voyage home he writes: "I went to America to convert the Indians, but O, who shall convert me? . . . What have I learned myself in the meantime? Why (what I least of all suspected) that I, who went to America to convert others, was never myself converted to God." Years afterward Mr. Wesley inserted in his journal, after the words above quoted, "I am not sure of this." Thus did a great soul struggle toward the clear light of Christian experience.



## QUESTIONS

1. To what part of America did John and Charles Wesley come, and for what purpose?
2. What occurred on the way over?
3. In what year did John Wesley return to England?
4. How long had he been in America?
5. What did he write about his religious experience on the way home?

## CHAPTER VI

### THE BEGINNING OF METHODIST EXPERIENCE

METHODISM has always emphasized the clear, definite experience of religion. We have traced John Wesley's struggles toward this great boon. We are now to see how he obtained it.

He landed in England February 1, 1738, and hastened to London. On the 7th he there met Peter Böhler, a pious Moravian. This meeting was always regarded by Wesley as the turning point in his religious career. Peter Böhler was nine years younger than Wesley. He was a native of Germany, and was at this time on his way to America. Almost daily these two met and conversed on religion for several weeks. "On the 22d of April," says Dr. Buckley, "the subject of instantaneous conversion was considered, and by the arguments of Böhler, the teachings of the Scriptures, and the testimony of certain witnesses the eyes of John Wesley were opened to see that such conversion is possible."

The Moravians thus had so much to do with the birth of Methodism that we take a glance at their history. They are the descendants of John Huss, who lived in Germany about one hundred years before Luther, who dared to teach some of the truths afterward taught by the Protestant reformers. He emphasized personal religion and spoke against the corrupt lives of the clergy and the oppressions of the Pope of Rome. The Pope had him condemned by the Council of Constance, and he was burned at the stake in 1415. But the people had the truth, and clung to it in spite of the Pope. They were finally driven to the Moravian Mountains, in northern Bohemia. From

these mountains they took their name, and dwelt here in great simplicity and purity for more than three centuries.

In 1722 a colony of them, led by Christian David, mi-



GEORGE WHITEFIELD

grated to Saxony and settled on lands owned by Count Zinzendorf, who became a leader among them. It was Zinzendorf who brought the colony of these devoted people to America, and settled at Bethlehem, Pennsylvania. Peter Böhler was a member of the Saxon colony at Herrnhut. A kind Providence had prepared him to lead John Wesley into the light. Thus a spark from the fire which consumed Huss at Constance found its way to London, and lit the flame which is spreading 'round the world in Methodism.

After these conversations with Wesley, Böhler wrote to a friend this close analysis of him: "A good-natured man, knew he did not properly believe on the Saviour, and was willing to be taught." Wesley wrote the result of these conversations in these words: "I was now thoroughly convinced; and by the grace of God I resolved to seek it unto the end." Later he wrote: "I continued thus to seek it till Wednesday, May 24 [1738]. I think it was about five this morning that I opened my Testament on these words: 'There are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises; even that ye should be partakers of the divine nature.' Just as I went out I opened it again on these words: 'Thou art not far from the kingdom of God.' . . . In the evening I went very unwillingly to a society in Aldersgate Street, where one was reading Luther's preface to the Epistle to the Romans. About a quarter before nine, while he was describing the change which God works in the heart through faith in Christ, I felt my heart strangely warmed. I felt I did trust in Christ, Christ alone, for salvation; and an assurance was given me that he had taken away my sins, even mine, and saved me from the law of sin and death." He had been formally religious from his youth, now he had the experience.

Charles Wesley had obtained a similar experience three days before John. He had been attending the meetings of the Moravian societies, such as that in Aldersgate Street, where John obtained the blessing. The saintly Böhler led Charles also to the light. Of the Moravian meetings he wrote: "I thought myself in a choir of angels." After a long illness, at the home of a pious mechanic, he finally attained the peace of God. This experience sings in many Methodist hymns.

George Whitefield was converted before either of the Wesleys. He entered the new life in Christ after a great struggle, of which he says: "God only knows how many nights I have lain upon my bed groaning under what I felt. Whole days and weeks have I spent lying prostrate on the ground in silent or vocal prayer." His conversion was as definite as the conviction above described. He says of it: "O, with what joy, joy unspeakable, even joy that was full of glory, was my soul filled when the weight of sin went off, and an abiding sense of the pardoning love of God and a full assurance of faith broke in upon my disconsolate soul." Thus after great struggle did these heroic men learn the way of simple faith, and obtained an experience so blessed that they counted it their duty and joy to spend the rest of their lives in pointing out the way to others.

#### QUESTIONS

1. Give date of Wesley's conversion.
2. Give name of the man who did so much to lead him into the light.
3. What sect of Christians had a great deal to do with the first Methodist experience?
4. What did Mr. Wesley say about the feeling of his heart at the time of his conversion?
5. What other prominent Methodists were converted just before this?



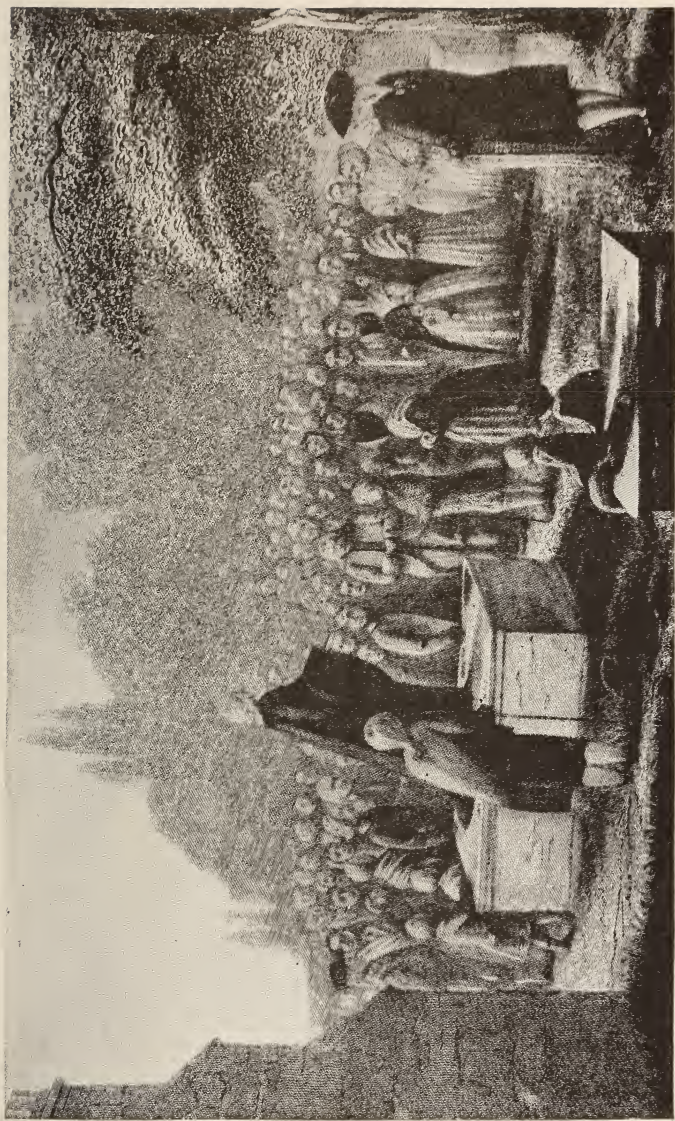
## CHAPTER VII

### FIRST METHODIST PREACHING

JOHN WESLEY, about one month after his conversion, made a journey to Herrnhut, the Moravian settlement spoken of in the last chapter. Here he spent considerable time in religious conversation with the pious Moravians. He sat at the feet of Christian David, a carpenter by trade, without the education of the schools, but rich in common sense and experimental piety.

This trip established Wesley in his new experience and helped prepare him to preach the new light to others. He learned also at Herrnhut three lessons of great practical value to him afterward: 1. That the spiritual and experimental part of Christianity is more important than church forms. 2. The power of saintly men in preaching though their education is limited. 3. The value of little societies formed within the church for the advancement of spiritual life.

With happy heart and a mind filled with practical lessons Wesley returned to London. He began at once to preach among the little societies gathered by the Moravians, but consisting largely of people belonging to the English Church. Such was the society in Aldersgate Street, where Wesley was converted. He arrived in England on Saturday night, and in his Journal says of the next day: "I began again to declare in my own country the glad tidings of salvation, preaching three times, and afterward expounding the Holy Scripture to a large company in the Minories." His brother Charles had been preaching the new experience. Several clergymen



JOHN WESLEY PREACHING ON HIS FATHER'S TOMB AT EPWORTH



had accepted the new views, and many converts had been made.

From this time on John Wesley preached incessantly. The people crowded to hear him. He preached every morning at five o'clock, and every evening, also, in one or more of the societies. On Saturday he preached in the afternoon. On Sunday, after the early morning preaching, he preached again at eleven, at two, and at five, traveling many miles between services.

About the time that Wesley began preaching George Whitefield, who had been preaching in America, and had attained great success, returned to England. He and Wesley were soon counseling together. During his American tour Whitefield had preached much in the open air to multitudes that no church would hold. He now advised this plan in England, inasmuch as the churches were being closed against the Methodists.

Mr. Wesley did not readily adapt himself to this method. Of his views at this time he says, "I should have thought the saving of souls almost a sin if it had not been done in a church." He gives this defense for open-air preaching: "Be pleased to observe: (1) That I was forbidden as by a general consent to preach in any church. . . . (2) That I had no design to preach in the open air until after this oppression." Though threatened by the archbishop for open-air preaching he and Charles and Whitefield went on preaching to ten, twenty, and even thirty thousand people at once.

In 1742 John Wesley came to Epworth, once his father's parish, and his own birthplace. On Sunday morning the worldly rector refused him the pulpit, but as the people were leaving the church an attendant of Wesley's announced that he would preach in the graveyard in the afternoon. An immense crowd assembled,

and Wesley mounted his father's tombstone and preached with great power. Here for one week he daily took his stand and "cried aloud to the earnestly attentive congregations." Many dropped as dead under the preaching, and at times the congregations lifted their voices and wept aloud.

#### QUESTIONS

1. What place did John Wesley visit soon after his conversion?
2. What was the result of his visit?
3. At what early hour in the morning did Wesley preach?
4. From what great preacher did Mr. Wesley get the practice of field preaching?
5. Where did Mr. Wesley preach when denied the church at Epworth?

## CHAPTER VIII

### THE FIRST SOCIETY AND THE FIRST CHURCH

#### I. FIRST SOCIETY

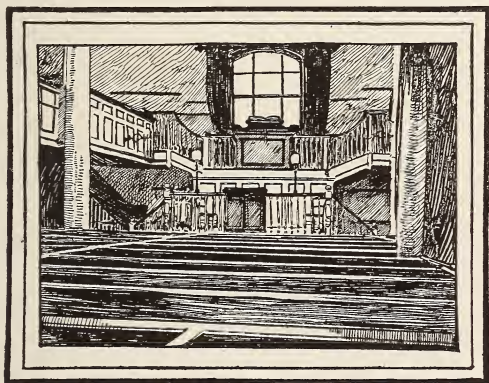
NEAR the close of 1739 eight or ten persons, earnestly desiring to lead a religious life, came to John Wesley in London and requested that he would meet them regularly for counsel and prayer. He agreed to do so, naming Thursday evening as the time for their meeting. Mr. Wesley himself thus writes: "The first evening about twelve persons came; the next week thirty or forty. When they were increased to about a hundred I took down their names and places of abode, intending as often as was convenient to call upon them at their homes. Thus, without any previous plan, began the Methodist society in England—a company of people associating together to help each other to work out their own salvation." This was the first Methodist society. It grew so rapidly that a year later it had more than a thousand members.

Very soon after the society was established in London a similar work followed at Bristol. George Whitefield, going like a flame of fire throughout England, preaching the gospel as taught by the Methodists, came to Bristol. Here he preached in the open air on a large bowling green to the thousands who flocked to hear him. The work grew mightily, so Whitefield sent for Wesley to come to his aid. Soon Whitefield left Wesley to carry on the work alone. May 2, 1739, Wesley preached here his first sermon in the open air to an audience of three thousand people. His text was, "The Spirit of the

Lord is upon me, because he hath anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor." The converts were many, and it was natural that they should be formed into a society. This was accomplished near the close of 1739. Soon after this societies were formed at Kingswood, Bath, and Moorfields on the edge of London, and before long they spread all over England.

## 2. FIRST CHURCH

THIS work at Bristol led to the building of the first Methodist church in the world. In fact, the foundation of this first Methodist church was laid before there was any Methodist Society formed anywhere. The labors of Whitefield at Bristol had gathered in such a multitude of folks that they demanded a house of worship. May 12,



CHURCH IN BRISTOL

1739, the cornerstone for such a structure was laid "with the voice of thanksgiving and praise."

However, building went on so slowly at Bristol that the Foundry at Moorfields, on the edge of London, was

opened for church services first. On leaving Bristol, as related above, Whitefield went to London, where his open-air preaching became the sensation of the great city. Soon Wesley joined him here, and at Moorfields they preached to audiences numbering sixty thousand or more. In fact, Whitefield says in his diary that at Hyde Park corner he preached to an audience of eighty thousand.

In the fall of 1739, when the cold weather made open-air preaching impossible, Mr. Wesley purchased at Moorfields an old, abandoned cannon foundry and had it fitted up for church purposes. On the first floor were a room for preaching seating fifteen hundred people, a large room for school purposes, and a book room, where religious books were for sale. On the second floor were apartments fitted up for Mr. Wesley's home. Here his aged mother, Susannah, made her home with him until her death in 1742. Church, school, parsonage, book store, medical dispensary, loan office, the Foundry became the headquarters of Methodism for half a century.

#### QUESTIONS

1. When and where was the first Methodist church built?
2. Give account of the first Methodist society.
3. Describe the Foundry.
4. Where did Susannah Wesley spend her last days?
5. Speak of Whitefield preaching in the open air.

## CHAPTER IX

### OTHER IMPORTANT BEGINNINGS

ABOUT this time arose other Methodist usages which have been of great service to the church.

1. Class Meeting. The class meeting grew out of the necessity brought about by the first Methodist church. A heavy debt rested on the meetinghouse at Bristol. To encourage systematic giving Mr. Wesley divided the membership into classes of twelve each, of whom one, as leader, was to see each member and secure a penny, weekly, toward the debt. This worked very well. After a little time the leaders reported that some of the members did not live as they ought. Mr. Wesley then instructed the leaders to make particular inquiry each week into the behavior of each member. Thus arose the class meeting, which was destined to be so useful in Methodism.

2. Watch Night. This service originated at Kingswood. There the rough miners had been in the habit of spending the last night of the year in drunkenness and carousing; now those who were converted met and spent the time in prayer and testimony. The custom was afterward observed in many places with excellent results, and the service is still popular. In early Methodism it was held once a month, and at Kingswood services were held far into the night. Wesley corrected the abuse, but preserved the custom and instituted it at other places.

3. Local Preachers. The use of local preachers began in this early period. Mr. Wesley was at first firmly opposed to anyone other than regular ministers preaching.

It happened thus: Mr. Wesley asked Thomas Maxfield, a layman, to keep watch over the flock at the foundry during his absence from London. Maxfield not only met the classes, but there was so much interest that almost unintentionally he began to preach, and did it most acceptably.

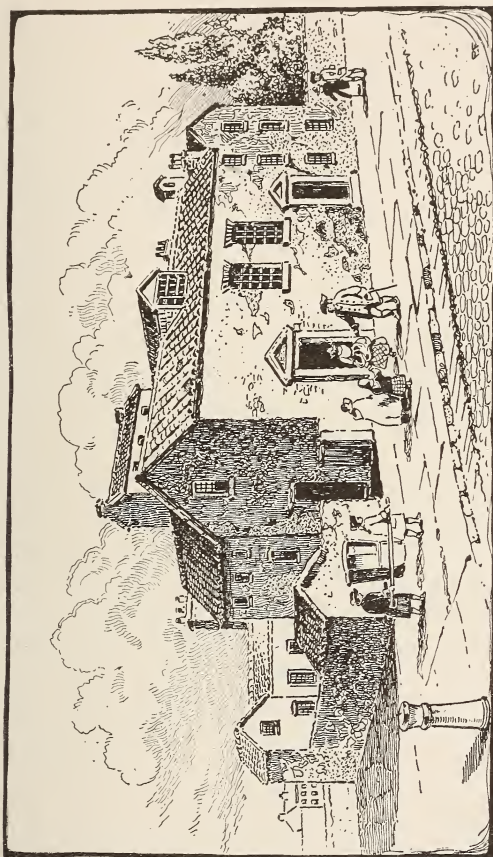
Some one wrote Mr. Wesley and he returned to stop the irregularity. But his mother, Susannah, was yet alive, making her home at the foundry. One of the last important acts of her life was to give John advice about lay preaching. When he manifested to her his disapproval of Maxfield's course she said, "Take care what you do respecting that young man; he is as surely called of God to preach as you are." She told John to hear him, and as a result he said, "It is the Lord; let him do what seemeth to him good." Thus Thomas Maxfield became the first of that long list of local preachers, not yet complete, who have done so much to save souls, preach the gospel, and build up the church.

4. The First Doctrinal Stand. It was in the year 1741 that Methodism was fully and openly committed to the doctrine and preaching of free grace. That year George Whitefield, who had taken up the doctrine of unconditional election while in America, began to write and to preach it. This was that frightful doctrine that some are foreordained of God to be saved and others to be lost. It is known as Calvinism. Mr. Wesley was thus forced to take a stand, which he did by declaring salvation free to all who will believe. From this time Whitefield went on preaching his doctrine while Wesley adhered strictly to his own.

5. First Conference. Wesley and his helpers went rapidly on in their work of saving souls. It was considered wise to call the workers together in Conference.



This was done by Mr. Wesley, who wrote them that he desired "their advice as to the best method of carrying



FOUNDRY

on the work of God." This Conference was held at the foundry, in London, June 25-29, 1744. There were present John and Charles Wesley, four clergymen of the

Church of England, who were interested in Methodism, and four local preachers. Charles Wesley preached at the opening service. The five days were spent in prayer, singing, and the discussion of such practical doctrines as repentance, faith, regeneration, and sanctification. They sought the best methods of helping each other to live holy lives and to do the most toward leading souls to Christ. This first Conference is the head of a long list still growing. The next Conference was held at Bristol, 1745, and ever since they have been held annually.

#### QUESTIONS

1. Tell how the Class Meeting arose.
2. Tell about Watch Night.
3. On what doctrine did Wesley and Whitefield differ?
4. Name the first local preacher and tell how he began to preach.
5. Tell about the first Methodist Conference.

## CHAPTER X

### SOME GIANTS OF THOSE DAYS

JOHN WESLEY was the great apostle of Methodism, but with him there labored a band of noble men.

1. *George Whitefield*. Attention has already been given to the conversion and wonderful preaching of this extraordinary man. He was the first of the Holy Club to be converted, experiencing this grace in 1735. He preached throughout England, Scotland, Ireland, Wales, and in America. He lived to be fifty-six, dying in 1770. He crossed the Atlantic thirteen times, and preached eighteen thousand sermons. His eloquence was very unusual.

2. *Charles Wesley*. This good man was the constant adviser and helper of his brother John. He was the originator of the Holy Club, and preceded his brother in preaching Methodist doctrine. He was the sweet singer of Methodism, a religious poet of the first order. His hymns recount every stage of religious experience, from conviction to the highest reaches of sanctification. Some of them came to him in the quiet of his study, others in the midst of his sermons, when he was in the habit of lining them to the congregation; two lines coming to him while the congregation sang the two previously announced. Frequently while riding horseback hymns came quickly to mind, and he jotted them down as soon as pen and paper were at hand. One hundred and twenty of his hymns are in the Methodist Hymnal. The early Methodists committed their hymns to memory, and

their fervent singing was, next to preaching, their most effective agency. Charles Wesley died in 1788, aged eighty years.

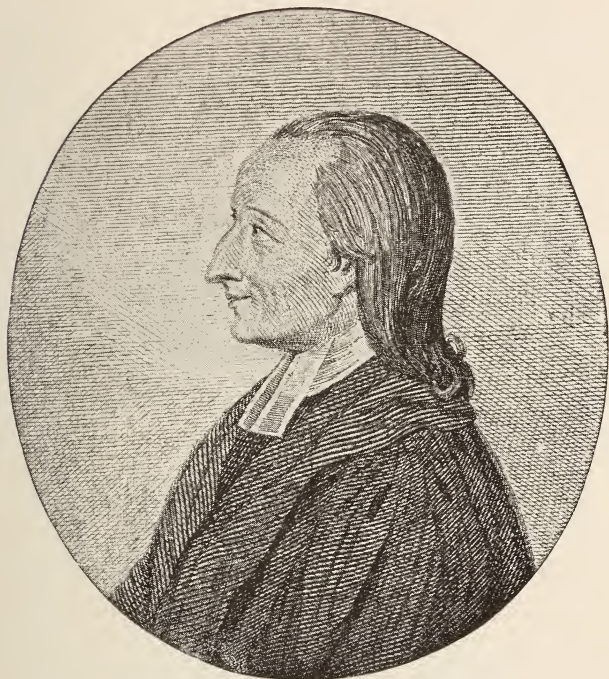
3. *John Fletcher*. He is known as the "saint of Methodism." Born in Switzerland, in 1729, he early became a great scholar and a master of French, German, Latin, Greek, and Hebrew. After serving in the army he went to England as a teacher. In 1755 he united with the Methodists. In 1760 he became rector at Madeley. In his zeal he became an ascetic. Southey says of him: "He lived on vegetables, and for some time on milk and water and bread; he sat up two whole nights in every week for the purpose of praying and reading and meditating on religious things; and on other nights never allowed himself to sleep as long as he could keep his attention to the book before him." He afterward forsook and condemned this course. He was the defender of Methodist doctrine against all comers. He died in 1785.

4. John Wesley's death. It occurred in London, March 2, 1791, at eighty-eight years of age. When nearing the end he was heard repeating, scores of times, "I'll praise! I'll praise!" Twice he exclaimed, "The best of all is God is with us!" Thus passed away this great man, of whom Macaulay says, "He was a man whose eloquence and logical sentences might have rendered him eminent in literature, whose genius for government was not inferior to that of Richelieu, and who devoted all his powers to what he sincerely believed to be the highest good of his species." He traveled, in the fifty years of his ministry, over two hundred and fifty thousand miles, chiefly on horseback, and preached over forty-two thousand sermons.

5. Extent of Methodism in 1791. We have chiefly traced its history in England. It had entered Ireland in

1747, when Thomas Williams, a local preacher from England, preached and established a society in Dublin.

Wales was hard soil, but under the labors of Griffith



JOHN FLETCHER

Jones and Howel Harris Methodism was well planted, and has made healthy growth.

Scotland was visited by Wesley and Whitefield, and the work begun; but Scotland has never been good Methodist soil.

By the time of Wesley's death Methodism had been

established for twenty-five years in America and made wonderful progress, which we are to trace in the succeeding chapters.

#### QUESTIONS

1. Tell what you can about George Whitefield.
2. Tell what you can about Charles Wesley and his hymns.
3. Tell what you know about John Fletcher.
4. When did John Wesley die? Give his dying testimony.
5. In what countries was Methodism found at Wesley's death?



## CHAPTER XI

### METHODISM PLANTED IN AMERICA

METHODISM has done its greatest work in America.

The Wesleys and Whitefield preached in America, but no churches were founded by them. It was not until 1766 that the work really began on this continent; twenty-seven years after its rise in England, and twenty-five before John Wesley's death.

In 1760 a party of emigrants sailed from Limerick, Ireland, for New York. The chief figure was a thoughtful, resolute young man named Philip Embury. His



PHILIP EMBURY

party consisted of his wife, Mary; two of his brothers and their wives; Peter Switzer, a brother to his wife; Paul Heck and his wife, Barbara, and a few others less prominent. Philip Embury was a carpenter by trade; had been converted in 1752. The story of his conversion is preserved in his own handwriting; it reads: "On Christmas Day, being Monday ye 25th of December in the year 1752, the Lord shone into my soul by a glimpse of his redeeming love; being an earnest of my redemption in Christ Jesus, to whom be glory forever and ever. Amen. PHIL: EMBURY."

Some of the party besides Embury were Christians, but certainly not all. After their arrival in New York those who were Christians seem to have lived a very easygoing Christian life. They found no church, and for six years there is no record of their religious doings. Many members of the party became open worldlings.

Another party came over from Ireland in 1765, some of whom were related to members of the first group. There was Paul Ruckle, a brother to Barbara Heck. It was in his house that Barbara was first moved to take the step which may be said to have begun Methodism in America. She came to make a social visit, but finding a party engaged in playing cards, her righteous soul was so vexed that she seized the cards and threw them into the fire, and then, having warned the players, left. With a mighty purpose she went direct to the home of Philip Embury and pleaded with him to begin to preach the word at once. He argued that he had no house in which to preach. She urged him to preach in his own house, and, with the decision characteristic of her sex, she went out and collected four others. These five made the first Methodist congregation in America. After singing and prayer, Embury preached and enrolled the members in a



ROBERT STRAWBRIDGE

class. He then met them every week. In a few months fourteen had been converted and were enrolled in two classes, one for men and one for women. Soon the attendance was too large for Embury's house, and a larger room, which had been used as a "Rigging Loft," was rented, and the work went on with increasing success.

About the same time that Embury began to preach in New York another local preacher from Ireland, Robert Strawbridge, began to preach at Sam's Creek, in Frederick County, Maryland. Strawbridge had been an itinerant preacher in Ireland, and when he landed in

America took up the work among his neighbors. Frederick County was then a backwoods country; only five years before the Indians had passed Forts Cumberland and Frederick, plundering and murdering, and went unchecked nearly to Baltimore. To this city the residents around had fled for safety.

Strawbridge gathered the people in his own house and preached to them the gospel, formed a Methodist society, and not long after built the "Log Meetinghouse" on Sam's Creek, about one mile from his home. It was a rude structure twenty-two feet square, and, though long occupied for worship, was never finished; had neither floor, windows, nor doors. Strawbridge became an itinerant, <sup>TRAVELING</sup> preaching in Maryland, Pennsylvania, Delaware, and Virginia. The first native preacher of this continent was one of his converts, Richard Owen, of Maryland.

Thus, without knowledge of each other, Embury and Strawbridge planted Methodism in New York and Maryland about the same time.

#### QUESTIONS

1. In what year was Methodism planted in America? 1700
2. ~~Name the man and woman who started Methodism in New York.~~
3. Where was Methodism started about the same time that it began in New York?
4. Who started it there, and from what land had he come?
5. Who was the first native preacher in America?

## CHAPTER XII

### METHODISM GROWS RAPIDLY

IN February, 1767, the Methodist society at New York, meeting in the Rigging Loft, were surprised at the appearance among them of a stranger, a soldier, in full military garb, with a sword by his side. At first they were alarmed, thinking he had come to disturb them. He entered heartily into the service, and at its close came up and introduced himself as "Captain Webb, of the king's service, and also a soldier of the cross, and a spiritual son of John Wesley." He further told them that Wesley had given him authority to preach. He was a soldier of the British army, and at that time in charge of the barracks at Albany, N. Y.

This stranger proved to be of great service to the Methodists of New York and elsewhere. It was largely through his influence that the infant society in New York secured the building of their first church, which was also the first in America. It was named "Wesley Chapel," and situated on John Street. It was built of stone, and was 42x60 feet. A ladder led to the gallery, and the seats were without backs. It was dedicated October 30, 1768, by Embury, who ascended the pulpit he himself had made, and preached from Hosea 10. 12: "Sow to yourselves in righteousness, reap in mercy; break up your fallow ground: for it is time to seek the Lord." In 1770 a parsonage was built, adjoining the church. The city of New York then had only twenty thousand inhabitants.

About this time Captain Webb was retired from the



army on full pay and began his itinerant ministry. He traveled through New Jersey, preaching with great power,



OLD WESLEY CHAPEL, JOHN STREET, NEW YORK

and founding societies at Burlington, Pemberton, Trenton, and many other places. He went to Philadelphia, preached in a sail loft, and organized a class of seven



members. Thus did Methodism originate in Philadelphia. He pushed on into Delaware, preaching at Wilmington, New Castle, and in the woods along the Brandywine.

Captain Webb and the society in New York now urged Mr. Wesley to send over some regular preachers to take charge of the work. He sent Richard Boardman and Joseph Pilmoor. They arrived and began their work at once, Pilmoor preaching in Philadelphia and Boardman in New York. After five months they exchanged places, and this was afterward the constant practice. This was the origin of Methodist itineracy in America.

The work grew so rapidly that, in response to another appeal, Mr. Wesley sent over two more preachers in 1771. Of one of them, Richard Wright, little is known except that he labored principally in Maryland and Virginia, but the other was to become the most prominent man in American Methodism. He was the son of an English farmer, and at seven was a diligent Bible student; went to Methodist preaching, was astonished to hear prayers without a book and preaching without paper, fell under conviction, and while praying in his father's barn was happily converted. Before he was seventeen he was leading services, and for two months before the Conference of 1771 had been thinking "that America was destined to be his field of labor." Wesley, with keen judgment of men, saw in this young man the elements of leadership and laid his hands upon him. Such was Francis Asbury. He and his companions landed in Philadelphia in October, 1771. Asbury now took practical control of the work, and was in labors abundant, preaching three and four times a day and itinerating continually.

In 1773 Mr. Wesley sent over two more helpers, Thomas Rankin and George Shadford. Wesley appointed

Rankin superintendent of the work in America. To Shadford he wrote: "I let you loose, George, on the great continent of America. Publish your message in the open face of the sun, and do all the good you can."

Rankin called together the first Methodist Conference



STONE CHAPEL, PIPE CREEK, MARYLAND

in America. It met in Philadelphia in July, 1773, with ten preachers present. The following appointments of preachers were made: "New York, Thomas Rankin, to change in four months; Philadelphia, George Shadford, to change in four months; New Jersey, John King, William Watters; Baltimore, Francis Asbury, Robert Strawbridge, Abraham Whitworth, Joseph Yearbry; Norfolk, Richard Wright; Petersburg, Robert Williams." New York re-

ported 180 members. Philadelphia 180, New Jersey 200, Maryland 500, Virginia, 100; total, 1,160. Preachers, 10. This was the size of Methodism in America in 1773.

## QUESTIONS

1. What British soldier surprised the Methodists in New York in 1767?
2. What was the name of the first church in America, and where was it built?
3. Give the names of the first two preachers sent to America by Mr. Wesley.
4. What preacher sent over by Mr. Wesley in 1771 became the leader in American Methodism?
5. When and where was the first Conference held in America?

## CHAPTER XIII

### STORMY DAYS OF THE REVOLUTION

THIS storm, like many others, was preceded by bright sunshine. The second Conference was held in Philadelphia, in May, 1774. It was found that the membership had increased from 1,160 to 2,073; nearly double in a year.

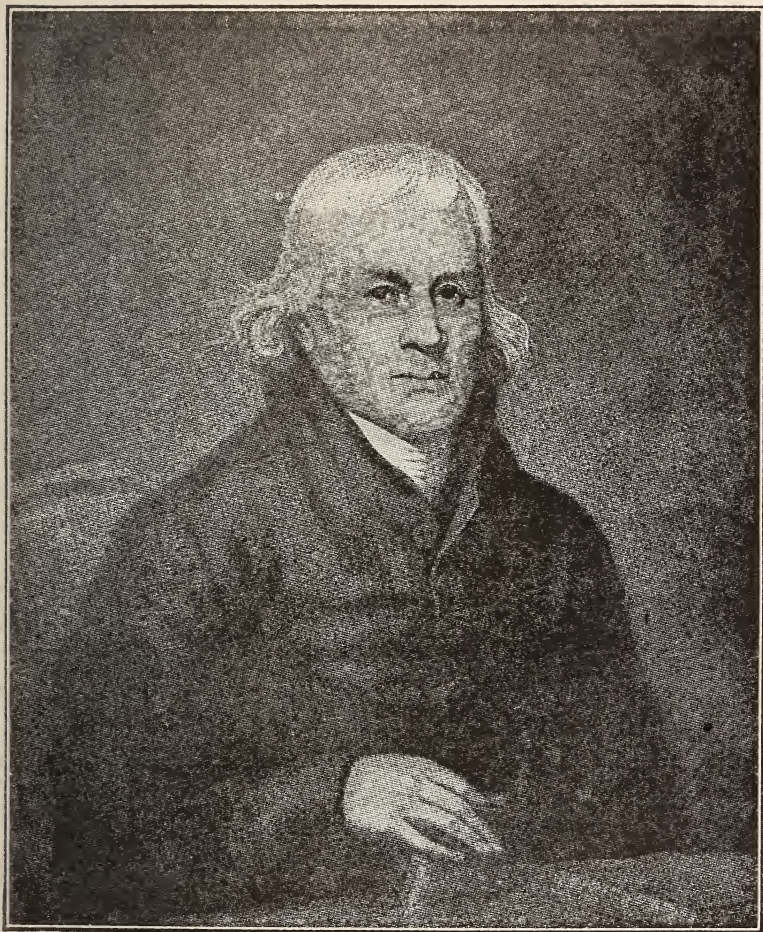
The chief characteristic of the year 1774 was the marvelous success of Asbury in gathering into the societies important families in the vicinity of Baltimore. The most important of these converts was Henry Dorsey Gough, who possessed a fortune of more than \$300,000. He was at first deeply prejudiced against Methodists, and forbade his wife going to hear them, but at last consented to go himself for the purpose of making sport of Asbury. The solemn manner of the preacher impressed him, and by the Holy Ghost he was deeply convicted of sin. While in this state of mind he was passing one day the cabin of one of his Negroes and heard the voice of prayer and praise.

He was deeply moved at his own ingratitude. A day or two later he left the dinner table and went to his room determined to find peace. Soon he returned crying, "I have found the Methodists' blessing! I have found the Methodists' God!" One hundred persons, white and black, were employed about his home, and he erected a chapel on his premises, the first Methodist church with a bell, and every morning and evening family and servants were called for worship. There was preaching every Sabbath.

As a result of such labor it was found at the third Annual Conference, held, like the others, in Philadelphia,



1775, that the membership had increased from 2,073 to 3,148. The great bulk of increase was in the South, Baltimore city alone reporting 840 members.



FRANCIS ASBURY

But the storm was gathering. The American colonies were already resisting the oppressive British rule. The battle of Lexington was fought April 19, 1775, about one month before the last Conference; the battle of Bunker Hill was fought June 17, one month after the Conference. The country was therefore in the midst of war. Most of the Methodist preachers were Englishmen, and many of them sympathized with the British cause, though some were true to the colonies. However, as a class they were strong in denouncing the war spirit and the position of the colonists in resisting British authority.

In the midst of circumstances already embarrassing, John Wesley, following his honest convictions, did a thing which proved very indiscreet. He published his views on the question at issue between the colonies and the mother country. He called it a "Calm Address," but it provoked a storm because it advised the colonists to submit to British rule.

Now, when we remember that Methodism in America was as fully under Wesley's control as that in England, we can see how in such time all Methodists, and especially all the preachers, were suspected of disloyalty and looked upon as British sympathizers. As such they were fervently hated and persecuted. This state of things greatly hindered the progress of the church for several years. However, the Conference of 1776, held for the first time in Baltimore, showed an increase of 773 members; a total of 4,921. This is not surprising, even with all the opposition, when it is known that George Shadford and his colleagues on the Virginia Circuit had 800 additions to the church that year.

The opposition became so strong that most of the preachers, who were English subjects, returned home, both for their own safety and because their usefulness



here was largely ended. Those who remained were forced to endure persecutions of the severest type, the story of which will be told in the next chapter.

#### QUESTIONS

1. What noted Methodist was converted near Baltimore, in 1774, through the labors of Asbury?
2. Tell the story of his conversion.
3. Why were all the Methodist preachers suspected of disloyalty during the Revolutionary War?
4. How was the progress of Methodism affected by the Revolutionary War?
5. What mistake did Mr. Wesley make at the outbreak of the Revolutionary War?

## CHAPTER XIV

### HEROIC METHODISM

THE hardships endured by the Methodists during the Revolutionary War developed heroes. At the very head of the list stands Francis Asbury. Unlike the most of his English brothers, he stood by the work at the risk of his life. After the Conference of 1776 he went to work on the Baltimore Circuit. While here he heard with sorrow of the departure for England of Rankin and Shadford, leaving him the only British Methodist preacher on the continent. His heroic nature as well as the divine leading induced him to stay.

However, he was soon suspected of disloyalty, and his life was in danger. His carriage was shot through, and he was arrested and fined £5 for preaching the gospel. In Maryland the law was such that every man could be forced to take up arms. This being against Asbury's conscience as a preacher, he retired to Delaware. For a season he made his home with Judge White. Judge White was arrested April 12, 1777, because, being a Methodist, he was supposed to be a British sympathizer. Asbury prudently left his home and for a month was concealed in the swamps and in the homes of strangers. Judge White was released after five months' imprisonment on the false charge, and with him Asbury spent many pleasant months. While in this retirement Asbury gained the friendship of Judge Barrett and Governor Bassett. The former built Barrett's Chapel, near Frederica, Delaware, and Governor Bassett became a great help to the Methodists. Asbury was in this kind of retirement for

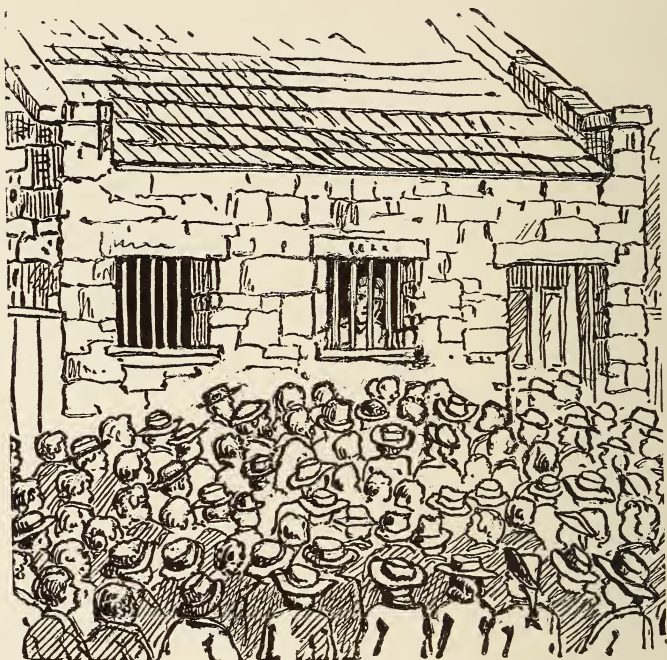
two years, 1778-1780, but even during that period this hero did much valuable work.

Freeborn Garrettson, another hero of this period, was received into Conference in 1776. He was raised on the Eastern Shore of Maryland, and in his youth heard Strawbridge preach in a neighbor's house; being deeply impressed. When about sixteen years of age he heard Francis Asbury preach, and his conviction became pungent and abiding. For three years he sought for peace in vain, for he had not yet surrendered to be an open follower of Christ, much less to be a Methodist. One day, as he was riding through the woods, he seemed to hear a voice saying, "These three years I have come seeking fruit on this fig tree, and find none. I have come once more to offer you life and salvation, and it is the last time." He threw the reins on the horse's neck, crossed his hands, and cried, "Lord, I submit." He was immediately converted, and praised the Lord aloud.

He went home, conducted family worship, set his slaves free the next day, and in a few weeks was holding public meetings. His exhortations to sinners were of such power that many fell to the floor crying aloud for mercy. He lived in stirring times, and had his trials, but he was made of heroic material. Devoted to the American side during the Revolution, he was yet conscientiously opposed to war. The oath of allegiance then administered in Maryland required a willingness to take up arms, and this Garrettson refused to do. He, however, went on preaching, being continually persecuted as disloyal. In Dorchester County he was arrested by a mob and thrown into jail, but he preached through the window.

After Maryland and Virginia he went into Delaware. Here his arrest was ordered. The magistrate met him in the road and beat him with a club for no other offense but

sitting quietly on his horse and looking at him. The officer feared at first that he had killed the preacher, as he lay insensible for some time. When he revived he began to pray for his assailant and to exhort him to be



PREACHING IN PRISON (CAMBRIDGE, MARYLAND)

saved. The officer was now thoroughly overcome, and said, "Mr. Garrettson, I will take you in my carriage wherever you want to go." This is only one of many such experiences in the life of this hero.

Benjamin Abbott was a hero of heroes. Born on Long Island, New York, in 1732, he spent his early life

in Philadelphia as an apprentice to a hatter. He was a careless boy and a very wicked man until he was forty years old, when he was soundly converted. He had been brought up a Calvinist, and when conviction seized him he thought he was a "reprobate" and could never be saved. He came near committing suicide, but was finally led to surrender to Christ, and then, he says: "My heart felt as light as a bird. I arose and called up the family, and took down the New Testament, sang and prayed." The next day he began to preach to all he met.

From such a start he soon became an itinerant, traveling over New Jersey and Delaware. His preaching was attended with marvelous effects. Hundreds fell unconscious under his preaching, and they soon arose to praise God for saving them. On one occasion he cried, "For aught I know there may be a murderer in this congregation." A man arose to leave the house, but fell down crying that it was he, for he had killed a man fifteen years before.

#### QUESTIONS

1. In what State and with what judge did Asbury find refuge during the Revolution?
2. Tell the story of Freeborn Garrettson's conversion, and of his persecutions in Maryland and Delaware.
3. What two noted characters were won for Methodism by Asbury during his enforced hiding?
4. Tell the story of the conversion of Benjamin Abbott.
5. Tell where Abbott preached, and give an example of his preaching power.

## CHAPTER XV

### THE CHURCH ORGANIZED IN AMERICA

THIS was accomplished at the famous Christmas Conference, held in Lovely Lane Chapel, Baltimore, Maryland, December 25, 1784. Up to this time the Methodists of America were under Mr. Wesley's absolute jurisdiction, and the work here was looked upon as a mission of the societies in England.

There were now several reasons for separate organization in America: 1. The colonies had gained their independence of British rule. 2. Mr. Wesley was now eighty-one years old, and must soon cease his labors. 3. The Methodist societies had grown to considerable size, having in them about fifteen-thousand members and eighty-four traveling preachers. 4. These were all without the sacraments of baptism and the Lord's Supper, as none of Mr. Wesley's ministers were or could be ordained.

So, after long considering the matter, and after much urging from his American brethren, Mr. Wesley sent over Dr. Thomas Coke, an elder in the Church of England, having first ordained him to be superintendent of the churches in America. He also selected Francis Asbury, already here on the field, to be joint superintendent with Coke. With Coke came Richard Whatcoat and Thomas Vasey, whom Mr. Wesley had first ordained deacons, then elders. These ordinations took place at Bristol, England; Mr. Wesley was assisted by Dr. Coke and Rev. James Creighton in the ordination of Whatcoat and Vasey, after which he ordained Coke to be superintendent—or bishop, as afterward called.



The party reached New York November 3, 1784, and were warmly welcomed by John Dickins, then pastor in the city. Coke preached, and the party then pushed on to Philadelphia. From here they proceeded to Delaware, and Coke was the guest of Judge Bassett, who, though not a member of the Methodist society, was erecting a



LOVELY LANE CHAPEL (BALTIMORE, MARYLAND)

chapel at his own expense. Here he met Freeborn Garretson on Sunday, the 14th, and the two went to Barrett's Chapel, then in the midst of a forest. It was a Quarterly Meeting occasion, and there was a large crowd, among whom were fifteen preachers. After administering the Lord's Supper to more than five hundred Coke preached. As the sermon concluded he saw a plainly dressed but robust-looking man making his way through the crowd and walking up into the pulpit. The stranger took Dr.

Coke in his arms and kissed him. This stranger was Francis Asbury.

Coke called the preachers together at the close of the service, and it was agreed to send Freeborn Garrettson "like an arrow, over North and South" to send messengers to his right and left, and gather all the preachers into Baltimore for Conference on Christmas Eve. Sixty preachers were present when the time came. A letter from Wesley addressed "To Dr. Coke, Mr. Asbury, and our brethren in North America" was solemnly read. It set forth his reasons for organizing a church, his authority in the ordination of the men sent over, and his desires concerning the character of the church to be organized.

Mr. Wesley's desires were all met, with the slight exception that Asbury refused to be ordained bishop, or superintendent, unless in addition to Mr. Wesley's appointment of him for that office he should be elected by the preachers. This was unanimously done, and he was ordained by Coke, assisted by Otterbein, of the German church, the latter being a favorite friend of Asbury. Deacons and elders were ordained at this Conference, and the first Methodist Discipline was adopted. In it the government of the Church was fully set forth. Of the Conference Whatcoat wrote, "We agreed to form a Methodist Episcopal Church, in which the liturgy as presented by the Rev. John Wesley should be read, and the sacraments be administered by a superintendent, elders, and deacons." The new church thus had its liturgy, for it adopted "The Sunday Service of the Methodists in North America," prepared and sent over by Mr. Wesley. Accordingly, the early Methodist preachers read prayers, and wore gowns and bands in the pulpit. During the Conference Coke preached every day at noon, and other

preachers morning and evening. The new church met with the universal favor of the societies, and was the nucleus of the most effective soul-saving agency on this continent, if not in the world.

#### QUESTIONS

1. When and where were the Methodist societies of America organized into a church?
2. What reasons led Mr. Wesley to consent to this organization?
3. Whom did Mr. Wesley send over to organize the church?
4. Who was sent out to call the preachers together, and how many came?
5. What kind of church was organized, and who became its first bishops?

## CHAPTER XVI

### GROWING NORTH, SOUTH, EAST, AND WEST

THE Christmas Conference, which organized the church, decided to build a college at Abingdon, Maryland. Early in June of the next year, 1785, Asbury laid the corner stone of the college, the first school under Methodist control in America. It was called—for our first two bishops—"Cokesbury." It was never a success. After four years it had only thirty students, and in 1795 it was destroyed by fire. This is part of Asbury's record concerning it: "The Lord called neither Mr. Whitefield nor the Methodists to build colleges. I wished only for schools; Dr. Coke wanted a college."

1. North. William Black, the founder of Methodism in Nova Scotia, was at the Christmas Conference looking for help for the Canada work. The Conference set apart Freeborn Garrettson and James Cromwell for this field. They soon embarked for Halifax and established a society. Methodism took a strong hold in Canada, and Garrettson's influence there became almost equal to that of Wesley in Europe or of Asbury in America.

2. East. Methodism was introduced into New England in 1789. This was difficult soil, but it found a successful sower in the fearless and powerful Jesse Lee. He had been converted in Virginia in 1773, and was soon preaching on the long circuit.

At the Conference of 1782 Asbury persuaded him to enter the itineracy. The influence of his preaching was equally great upon himself and his hearers. At times he was overcome with emotion, and often the congregation

wept until he could not be heard. His oratorical power and his courage fitted him for his great work.

We trace him on his first New England Circuit, beginning



FRANCIS ASBURY ON HIS ITINERANT TOUR IN 1771

at Norwalk, Conn., where, unable to get a house, he “went into the street, and began to sing, and then prayed and preached to a decent congregation.” Four days later he



is in New Haven, preaching in the courthouse to a crowd. At Fairfield four women and one man were the congregation at first, but as he went on he had forty hearers. In July he enters Boston, stands on a table in Boston Common, and preaches to two or three thousand people. The work was greatly opposed, but soon this hero had planted Methodism in the important centers of this difficult field.

3. West. That part of our country lying west of the Allegheny Mountains began to be settled about the close of the 18th century. Methodist itinerants followed the settlers into the forest. Soon after Daniel Boone settled in Kentucky local preachers brought Methodism there. So everywhere. Stevens says of these early heroes, "The adventures and hairbreadth escapes of McHenry, Lee, Kobler, Cook, Ogden, Burke, Garrett, and others would furnish a modern Tasso with matter for an epic." Their heroic adventures laid the foundation of a strong Methodism in all the West.

4. South. The General Conference of 1800 was held in Baltimore, and was the scene of a remarkable revival. Hundreds of conversions took place in the city, and the preachers, aflame with zeal, went to their circuits and kindled revival fires everywhere. It spread further south with great vigor. It continued for several years, and under its inspiration Methodism pushed further west; entering Indiana in 1802, when there were only a few settlers. It took root in Illinois in 1804. In 1805 Asbury sent Elisha M. Bowman as a missionary to the "Territory of Louisiana," thus kindling Methodism in the Southwest.

5. Camp meetings. Another result of the great revival was camp meetings. They arose in Kentucky under the labors of two brothers, John Magee, a Methodist local preacher, and William Magee, a Presbyterian min-



ister. They were making a preaching tour through the State when so much interest was taken that at the next round they found many families encamped in the woods. Thus begun, the camp meeting has been the source of much good. At times as many as twenty thousand persons were present, and so many fell under the power of God that they were laid in rows to prevent their being trodden upon. At a meeting at Cane Ridge three thousand were thus down at one time. Owing to the excitement, the Presbyterians soon gave this means of grace entirely to the Methodists. We gratefully received it, and made excellent use of it.

Bishop Asbury died near Fredericksburg, Virginia, Sunday, March 31, 1816, in the seventieth year of his age and the fifty-fifth of his ministry. In his American ministry he preached 16,500 sermons, ordained 4,000 preachers, and traveled on horseback and in carriage 247,000 miles. He takes rank with Wesley and Whitefield as one of the great characters of Methodism and of the Christian world.

#### QUESTIONS

1. Give the history of the first Methodist college in America.
2. To what country north of us did Methodism early spread, and who was sent there by the Christmas Conference?
3. Who introduced Methodism into New England? Tell of his early life.
4. When did the first General Conference meet? What remarkable event occurred at the General Conference of 1800?
5. Tell how camp meetings originated.

## CHAPTER XVII

### SOME GREAT BRANCHES OF THE MAIN TREE

1. THE Methodist Protestant Church. A controversy which had gone on for several years culminated in 1830 in the organization in Baltimore of the Methodist Protestant Church. The "reformers" were strongly opposed to having bishops and also to having presiding elders. Those dissatisfied expressed their sentiments in a somewhat bitter way in the *Repository*, a paper published at Trenton, New Jersey, and in another called "The Mutual Rights of the Ministers and Members of the Methodist Episcopal Church."

The wide circulation of these papers naturally excited opposition on the part of the authorities of the church, and ministers were forbidden to aid their circulation. Some persisted, were brought to trial, and were expelled. Many members were excluded on the same ground. These formed the nucleus of the Methodist Protestant Church. Their government differs mainly from the parent church in that they have no bishops or presiding elders, but elect presidents, who practically do the work both of elders and bishops. Their official paper is the *Methodist Protestant*, established in 1834. Their statistics for 1920 report 1,340 preachers and 186,873 members.

2. The Methodist Episcopal Church, South. In 1845 this important division of Methodism was organized. From its foundation in the United States down to 1800 the Methodist Episcopal Church had taken strong ground against slavery, but after that date there was a toning down of its sentiments for a number of years.

When the abolition sentiment became strong in the North—from 1833 on—the question began to be hotly



THOMAS COKE

discussed in the church. The church in the North demanded a stronger attitude against slavery, both in the expression of sentiment by the General Conference and

in its requirements of members. Many difficult cases arose. Finally the crisis came at the General Conference of 1844, when it was found that one of the bishops, J. O. Andrews, had become connected with slavery by marrying a woman who owned slaves.

After a prolonged and able debate it was finally ordered that he "desist from the exercise of his office [of bishop] so long as the impediment remains." A committee of nine reported a plan of separation. Thirteen Southern Conferences sent delegates to a convention which met in Louisville, Kentucky, May 1, 1845, and agreed upon an organization to be called "The Methodist Episcopal Church, South." The war which followed about sixteen years after this separation settled the slavery question, but the two Methodisms stand apart to this day, though active steps are now being taken to unite these branches of the great tree.

This branch of Methodism has had marvelous success, and its growth has surpassed that of any other large Protestant body in America. In 1920 its membership was 2,172,088.

#### QUESTIONS

1. When did the Methodist Protestant Church originate, and how?
2. What is its chief difference from the Methodist Episcopal Church?
3. What branch of Methodism arose in 1845?
4. What was the chief cause of the separation?
5. What has been its measure of success?

## CHAPTER XVIII

### ENGLISH METHODISM SINCE THE DEATH OF WESLEY

MR. WESLEY died in 1791. The great work of his life was now to be tested, and some feared that Methodism would fall to pieces after his departure. Mr. Wesley, while having no such fear, took wise precautions: First, by organizing American Methodism, in 1784, into a stable church, under the superintendency of bishops; and, second, by publishing the same year his *Deed of Declaration*, which put English Methodism on a solid footing.

Up to this time the property of the Methodists in England had been held by trustees for the use of such preachers as Mr. Wesley sent out, and after Wesley's death for such as the "Conference" sent. But the "Conference" was a continually changing body, and did not mean anybody in particular; it was not a legal body, incorporated. So Mr. Wesley named one hundred of his preachers as the legal Conference; they and their successors have been known as the "Legal Hundred." According to Mr. Wesley's directions the "Legal Hundred" meet once a year at London, Bristol, or any other place of their selection. They were to appoint a president and secretary, and were not allowed to station a preacher at the same church for more than three years. The largest body of Methodists in England are called "Wesleyans."

In July, 1791, the first Conference after Wesley's death met at Manchester. More than 300 preachers attended the session, and reported 78,993 members. William Thompson, who had been a lifelong friend of Wesley,

was elected president, and a letter from Wesley, left with Joseph Bradford for the purpose, was read to the Conference. The circuits were grouped into "districts"; not less than three nor more than eight composing a district. The preachers of a district were to meet and select a committee who should transact any necessary business of the district during the year, and select one of their number to meet like representatives of the other districts, annually, to make the appointments of the preachers. This latter work, which had been done by Mr. Wesley alone, was now in the hands of the "Stationing Committee."

Following this Conference a widespread discussion began as to the propriety of ordaining all the preachers, so that they could administer the sacraments, and it waxed warm. At the Conference of 1792 an unusual plan was followed. The sacrament question was the cause of a hopeless division of sentiment, so it was agreed to settle it by "drawing lots." In great solemnity the preachers knelt, while four of them led in prayer, after which Adam Clarke drew the lot, and then, standing on a table, proclaimed it: "You shall not give the sacraments this year." At the Conference of 1793 the question was settled as follows: "We therefore resolved that in those places where the members of the society were unanimous in their desire for the sacraments the preacher should grant it, and that all distinctions between ordained and unordained preachers should cease, and being received by the Conference and appointed to administer the sacraments, should be considered sufficient ordination." Thus the "Wesleyan" body in England started on its great career fully organized.

English Methodism has had great success and produced some wonderful characters. Among its great preachers was Jabez Bunting, born in 1770. A learned judge said





JABEZ BUNTING

of him: "Other preachers excelled him on some points, but none that I have ever heard equaled him as a whole."

Robert Newton, born in 1780, as a preacher ranks with Bunting; indeed, as a popular orator, he stands first in English Methodism. Throngs of Methodists and others attended his ministry in London, Dublin, and Edinburgh. Richard Watson became the leading theologian of this period of Methodism. He was born in 1781, and becoming a local preacher at fifteen years of age, was received into Conference before he was sixteen. His great work was the writing of that masterpiece of theology, *Theological Institutes*, completed in 1828. It has been a standard both in Europe and America.

Adam Clarke, scholar, commentator, preacher—and scarcely excelled in any—was born in Ireland in 1760; converted at seventeen, he was in Wesley's Kingswood School at twenty. Here he found a guinea while digging in the garden, and with it bought a Hebrew grammar, and laid the foundation of his great learning and lifework. He finished his Commentary on the whole Bible in 1825, after forty years of labor. It is still an authority among Methodists everywhere.

The Methodists of England are a lively, progressive folk, and exert a great influence for Christ. They have grown until they number more than 7,000 preachers and more than 1,500,000 members. We American Methodists may justly be proud of our mother church in England.

#### QUESTIONS

1. When did John Wesley die? What was the state of Methodism at that time?
2. What is the name of the chief body of Methodists in England?
3. Name two of the great preachers in English Methodism.
4. Name its great theologian and its great commentator.
5. Tell the story of Adam Clarke.

## CHAPTER XIX

### AMERICAN METHODISM 1844-1918

WE have traced the history of general Methodism down to 1844, and that of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, the Methodist Protestant Church, and the English Wesleyans down to 1920. We must now glance at the Methodist Episcopal Church 1844-1918.

Among the debaters of the slavery question at the General Conference of 1844 was Peter Cartwright. He was born in Virginia in 1785, but moved to the then Far West in his boyhood, settling in Kentucky. According to his own account there were then "no schools worth the name, no mill within forty miles, and imported tea, coffee, and sugar were unknown." He was converted at seventeen, and at eighteen was received into Conference and became a very useful preacher in the wild life of those early days in the West. He was a presiding elder for fifty years, and died in 1872. He was most heroic and one of the unique characters of Methodism.

During 1849 Methodism was officially introduced on the Pacific Coast—in California and in Oregon. John Owens, of Indiana, was appointed to that work, and crossed the plains with farm wagons drawn by oxen. William Taylor, of the Baltimore Conference, in later life missionary bishop for Africa, went the same year, having bought a church and shipped it by way of Cape Horn to San Francisco.

In 1872 fraternal relations with the Church South were established, and a proposition for the union of the two

Methodism was made by our bishops. This proposition is still being considered, with ever-increasing prospects of union.

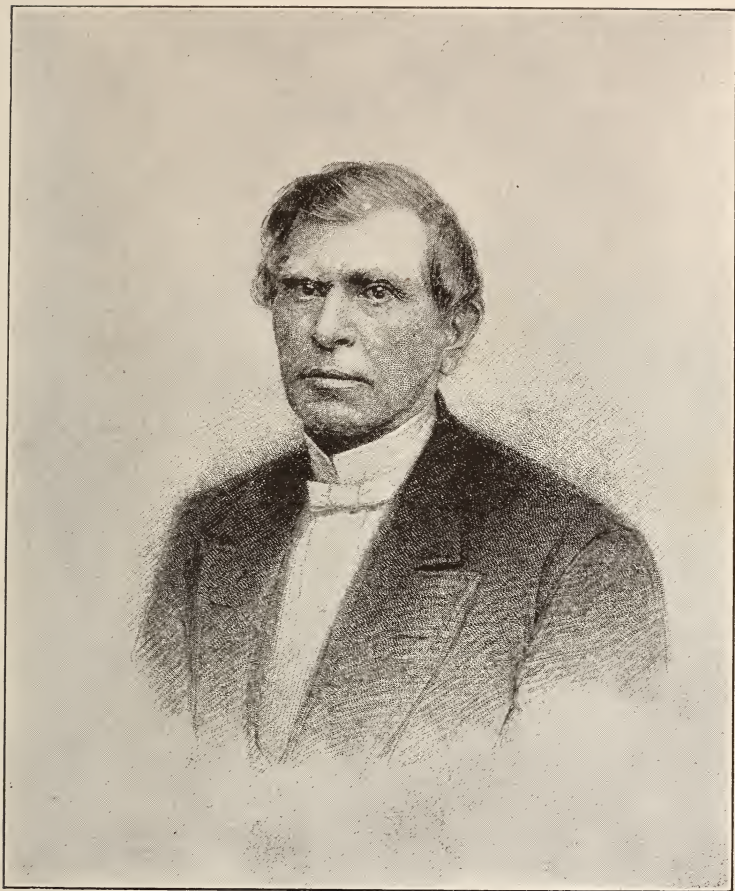
The first one hundred years of organized Methodism in America ended in 1884. The event was celebrated by the "Centennial Conference" held in Baltimore that year, ten branches of Methodism being represented.

When the General Conference of 1888 met in New York it was found that five women had been elected as lay delegates, and were present. After much debate it was determined not to admit them, but to refer the question to the vote of the whole church. The question was not finally settled until the General Conference of 1900, when, after a favorable vote by the members of the churches and the Annual Conferences, women delegates were finally admitted.

A few of the many great men of this period may be mentioned: John P. Durbin, born in Kentucky in 1800, was converted at eighteen and soon began to preach, but lost his voice because of extreme vehemence. Later he was advised to go to the cabins of the colored people and talk religion to them. His voice was soon recovered, and he laid the foundations of the simple but beautiful style which made him mighty in his subsequent ministry. As a camp meeting preacher in the West, and as chaplain of the Senate at Washington, he charmed both backwoodsman and senator alike. This prince among preachers died in 1876.

Matthew Simpson, born in Ohio in 1811, was early converted, studied medicine, entered the ministry, and joined the Pittsburgh Conference in 1834. His eloquence was the pride of Methodism for a quarter of a century. His style was simple and natural. Whether preaching to the farmers of the West or to the learned preachers





BISHOP SIMPSON

of the great Ecumenical Conference in London, he had the same power to win, thrill, and enthuse.

The General Conference of 1884 elected William Taylor missionary bishop for Africa. Born at Rockbridge,

Virginia, in 1821, he was sixty-three years of age when elected. He had had experience as a missionary in California, Australia, South America, and South Africa. His heroic pathfinding work for Christ in the Dark Continent for twelve years attracted the attention of the whole Christian world, and gave Africa a warm spot in the heart of the church. Because of ill health he retired at the General Conference of 1896, honored by the whole world.

The General Conference of 1900, meeting in Chicago, removed the time limit from the pastoral term, admitted lay delegates to the General Conference in equal numbers with the ministers, ordered the preparation of a new hymnal, and admitted the first women as delegates to the body.

The General Conference of 1908 took forward steps for the union of all Methodist bodies in America, changed the name "presiding elder" to "district superintendent," made radical provision for the better support of Conference Claimants, and elected eight bishops.

The General Conference of 1916 made a notable revision of the Ritual, approved the movement for the equal political franchise of women, adopted a world program for its missionary work, and provided for the observance of the Centenary of the organized missionary work of the church during the year 1919.

In 1920 the Methodist Episcopal Church had more than 20,000 preachers and 4,175,502 members.

#### QUESTIONS

1. Tell about Peter Cartwright.
2. Tell about the beginning of Methodism on the Pacific Coast.
3. Tell about the admission of women to the General Conference.
4. Tell about Matthew Simpson.
5. Tell about William Taylor.



## CHAPTER XX

### MOST RECENT EVENTS IN METHODISM

#### I. THE CENTENARY OF 1919

THE year 1919 marks a new era in the history of the Methodist Episcopal Church. It was in 1819 that Methodist missionary work began, and the Missionary Society of the church was organized. The General Conference of 1916 arranged for the observance of this centenary by appointing a strong committee with Dr. S. Earl Taylor as executive secretary.

It was determined that the Centenary should spend its chief energies, not in glorifying the past, but in working out a program that would put the missionary work of the church on a really efficient basis at home and abroad. Careful surveys of all fields revealed the need of \$40,000-000 for home fields and an equal amount for foreign fields. To this was added \$25,000,000 for war emergency and reconstruction. Thus the church was asked to show its gratitude for the past and its determination for rapid advance for the future by contributing \$105,000,000 in five years beginning with 1919.

A great campaign of education, intercession, stewardship, and finance was carried forward from the summer of 1918 until the completion of the financial canvass in June, 1919. The subscriptions totaled more than \$113,000-000. The educational, spiritual, and financial success of the Centenary gave new impulse to all the activities of the church throughout the whole world.

## 2. THE GENERAL CONFERENCE OF 1920

This Conference, encouraged by the success of the Centenary movement, planned for enlarged work at home and abroad. For this purpose it elected seventeen new bishops, including two Negroes. New residences for bishops were established at Indianapolis, Mexico City, Paris, Copenhagen, Bangalore, Calcutta, Singapore, and Foochow. These new centers of supervision were made necessary by the extended work of the church. The Conference also provided for the licensing of women as local preachers, and appointed a Committee on Conservation and Advance to carry forward and perpetuate the Centenary movement.

## 3. DEATH OF JAMES M. BUCKLEY

In 1920 James M. Buckley, after a very remarkable career as preacher, editor, and ecclesiastical statesman, came to his crowning. Though very delicate in early life, he fought his way to health, and lived to be more than eighty-four years of age. After serving as pastor of several of our largest churches he was elected editor of *The Christian Advocate* in 1880. Here he served the church for thirty-two years in a very unusual way. During most of this long period he was recognized as the leader in the General Conference, a most forceful champion of the faith against all opponents, and perhaps the most influential man in the church.

## 4. BETTER SUPPORT OF CONFERENCE CLAIMANTS

As previously noted, the General Conference of 1908 took a forward step for the better support of retired preachers and the widows and dependent children of deceased preachers. As a result most of the Conferences

now have endowment funds, the interest of which added to the annual collections has greatly increased the care taken of these worthy and dependent servants of the church. In 1908 the church paid to all its Conference Claimants \$600,000. By 1922 this amount had increased to \$1,643,000.

#### QUESTIONS

1. What events were celebrated in the Centenary of 1919?
2. What plans were made for the Centenary? Amount subscribed?
3. Tell something about the General Conference of 1920.
4. Tell about James M. Buckley.
5. Tell of the better support of Conference Claimants.

## CHAPTER XXI

### A GLIMPSE AT HOME MISSION FIELDS

OUR missionary work began in the homeland, and in a most tragic way. One Sabbath in 1816 John Stewart, a colored man who had been given to drunkenness, was converted under the preaching of Marcus Lindsey, in Marietta, Ohio. The next day he seemed to be led by a voice to Goshen, where he preached to the Delaware Indians, after he had charmed them with his singing. He then went to the upper Sandusky and preached to the Wyandot Indians. Many Indians, including several chiefs, were converted.

The story of these remarkable facts aroused the whole church, and the need of leadership and money to properly carry on this work led to the organization of the Missionary Society of our church. Gabriel P. Disosway, a devoted young business man of New York, first got the vision and urged the organization which was perfected in New York, April 5, 1819, and was adopted by the General Conference of 1820. Among the inspiring leaders of the society have been Nathan Bangs, Charles Pitman, J. P. Durbin, C. C. McCabe, A. B. Leonard, and S. Earl Taylor.

The General Conference of 1904 separated our home and foreign work and ordered that after January 1, 1907, the home work should be administered by a Board of Home Missions and Church Extension, and the foreign by a Board of Foreign Missions.

The Board of Home Missions and Church Extension carries on its work under the following departments:

Church Extension, Frontier Work, City Work, Rural Work, and Evangelism.

### HOME MISSION FIELDS

1. *Indians.* Beginning in 1816, with the work of John Stewart among the Wyandots, the missions of the Methodist Episcopal Church among the Indians have continued with success to this day. There are in the United States 350,000 Indians. They are very difficult to reach and save. We are now carrying on our work among 25 tribes and reaching a population of 13,000. We have 35 ministers in these tribes and more than 2,500 members of the church.

2. *Negroes.* Immediately after the Civil War the Methodist Episcopal Church began its work of building schools and churches among the Negroes. As 90 per cent of the Negroes are in 14 Southern States our missions to that race are chiefly in the South.

Of the 2,000 preachers in our Negro Conferences nearly 1,000 are in part or whole supported by our Board of Home Missions. We have to-day 20 Negro Conferences, 2,000 preachers, and 354,000 members of church. Our schools and colleges among Negroes number 18, and have sent out 200,000 graduates.

3. *Mormons.* The blackest spot on the fair face of our republic is Mormonism. It originated in 1830. Its growth during the nearly one hundred years has not been very rapid, as it now claims only 450,000 members. Of these 293,000 are in Utah, 78,000 in Idaho, and 15,000 each in Arizona and Wyoming. They have been very ambitious to extend, and for this purpose have 1,400 missionaries in the field. Their appeal is to the lowest motives in human nature.

Our church began its work among them in 1869, and

now has 34 Sunday schools, 24 churches, and 2,000 members. But the largest results are not in the above figures, but in the gradual change of principles and conduct on the part of the Mormons themselves. For instance, they once preached and practiced polygamy, with all its sexual crimes, openly and boldly as the very basis of their religion. To-day they deny it, though it is still in their creed and practiced by not a few.

4. *Foreign-Speaking Work.* The Board of Home Missions, besides helping liberally to support the work within the German, Swedish, and Norewegian-Danish Conferences in the United States, maintains missions among the Italians, Poles, Japanese, Chinese, Spaniards, and other foreign populations throughout our country. In all, our Home Mission work is conducted in 25 different languages.

5. *Hawaii.* Our work in Hawaii began in 1894, and is carried on successfully among the English, Japanese, Korean, and Filipino settlements found there. We have 36 pastors and 2,000 members.

6. *Porto Rico.* The United States government took possession of Porto Rico in 1898, and our mission work was opened there the next year, 1899, by the Rev. C. W. Drees. The work has met with more than ordinary success. We now have 14 missionaries, 13 native preachers, and more than 5,000 members.

7. *Special Department Work.* In many of our cities the poorer sections are being greatly helped through the work carried on by "The Department of City Work." The same is true of the needy sections of our country districts through the labors of "The Department of Rural Work." "The Department of Church Extension" assists in building churches in the most needed places throughout the land. "The Department of Evangelism" seeks to



make effective this supreme work of the churches everywhere. "The Frontier Department" is helping to plant churches in the new frontier sections.

#### QUESTIONS

1. Tell the story of John Stewart's conversion, and his call to preach to the Indians.
2. Give some account of our mission work among Negroes.
3. Tell about the Mormons, and our work among them.
4. In how many languages do we conduct mission work in this country?
5. Tell of our work in Hawaii and in Porto Rico.

## CHAPTER XXII

### A GLIMPSE AT FOREIGN MISSION FIELDS

INTERESTING volumes might be written about our mission work in foreign lands. Here we can only take a glimpse at the various fields.

1. *Africa*. This, the first of our Foreign Missions, was begun in 1833. The heroic Melville B. Cox, the first missionary, was a consumptive, and lived only five months after reaching Liberia. The epitaph which he suggested for his grave has never ceased to inspire the church: "Though a thousand fall let not Africa be given up." The work which Cox had started was quickly taken up by others, and to-day we have successful missions in Liberia, Angola, and the Madeira Islands on the West Coast; in the Congo region of Central Africa; in Rhodesia and Portuguese East Africa on the East Coast; and in North Africa. We have 20,000 members in Africa.

2. *South America*. In this, our twin continent, work was begun in 1836 by the appointment of Justin Spaulding to Rio Janeiro and John Dempster to Buenos Ayres. Until recent years our work has progressed slowly in South America, but we have missions in Argentina, Paraguay, Uruguay, Chile, Bolivia, Peru, Ecuador, and Panama. With the changed conditions in South America, including religious liberty all over the continent, the outlook for our mission work is very bright. We have 11,375 Methodists in South America.

3. *China*. Our missions in this vast empire, containing one fourth of the world's population, began in 1847 by the

sending of J. E. Collins and Moses C. White with their wives as missionaries. We were ten years in China before we had a single convert; now we have six strong Conferences. With the new China our work is moving apace. We have 73,000 members in China.

4. *Europe*. We are building a strong Methodism on the continent of Europe. Our work began there as follows: Germany, 1849; Switzerland, 1856; Norway, 1853; Sweden, 1854; Denmark, 1857; Bulgaria, 1857; Italy, 1871; Finland, 1883; France, 1907; Russia, 1907. In all Europe we have nearly 80,000 members.

5. *India*. This has been one of our most popular and most successful mission fields. It was begun by the heroic William Butler at Bareilly, in North India, in 1856. Joel T. Janvier, a native, lent us by the Presbyterians, became Dr. Butler's interpreter, our first native preacher, and a man of great influence. He died in 1900. Dr. Butler died in 1899. James M. Thoburn went to India in 1859, was elected Missionary Bishop for Southern Asia in 1888, retired in 1908, having spent nearly fifty years of very successful work in India. William Taylor, afterward missionary bishop for Africa, a mighty evangelist, laid the foundations of our work in South India. He "scattered Methodism all over the map." We now have strong Conferences in India and the people coming in mass. Members of the church in India, 250,000.

6. *Malaysia*. Work was begun here in the "Island Empire" in 1885 by Bishop J. M. Thoburn and W. F. Oldham. Eight years later it was organized as a Conference. This vast territory, composed of the Malay Peninsula, pointing south from Asia, and the group of islands extending from its tip to the borders of Australia, contains a population of more than 70,000,000 people. Ours is the only American church at work in this vast

field. Singapore, one of the great cosmopolitan cities of the world, is the center of our work.

7. *Japan*. Our mission was begun here in 1873 by R. S. Maclay, long a leader of our work in China. The progress here has been so great that it has been said, "Nothing remains unchanged in Japan except its name." In 1907 our missions in Japan united with those of The Methodist Episcopal Church, South, and The Methodist Church of Canada to form "The Methodist Church of Japan."

8. *Mexico*. William Butler, the heroic founder of our mission in India, was sent in 1873, to begin work in Mexico. The work has grown slowly because of Roman Catholic opposition, and the disturbed state of the country. It was organized as a Conference in 1885. We have 7,000 members in Mexico.

9. *Italy*. This is one of our healthiest missions. It was begun in 1871 by Leroy M. Vernon. William Burt, now Bishop, did heroic work as Superintendent for several years. Our members number 3,664.

10. *Korea*. Our first missionaries to Korea, W. B. Scranton and H. G. Appenzeller, went to the field in 1885. The work has prospered from the beginning. In December, 1889, the first society was formed. A remarkable revival began in 1910 and has brought in the natives by the hundred. The present membership in Korea is 20,000.

11. *Philippine Islands*. Almost before the guns of Admiral Dewey's fleet had cooled in Manila harbor, Bishop J. M. Thoburn was on hand, preaching the gospel to thousands in a large hall in Manila. The islands have proven very fertile soil for Methodism, one of our most successful missions. As a result we have more than 54,000 members in the Philippines.

## SUMMARY OF FOREIGN MISSIONS, 1922

Our Board of Foreign Missions supports 1,133 missionaries and 16,425 native workers in 20 foreign fields. In those fields we have 2,725 churches with 697,436 members.

## QUESTIONS

1. Tell the story of our first foreign missionary.
2. Name all our foreign fields you can.
3. Give some account of our work in India.
4. Describe the beginning of our work in the Philippines.
5. Give summary of our foreign missions.

## CHAPTER XXIII

### METHODIST WOMEN AT THE WORLD TASK

1. *The Woman's Foreign Missionary Society.* The wretched condition of women in heathen lands, and the social customs of those lands which make it impossible for men missionaries to bring the gospel to the women, led inevitably to a great organization of women to assist in the task of saving the world.

This society was organized in Boston, 1869, by eight consecrated women, among whom were Mrs. William Butler and Mrs. E. W. Parker, wives of missionaries in India. Some time before this J. M. Thoburn, a leader in our work in India, seeing clearly the need of women's work for women in that land, had written his sister, Isabella, then a school teacher in Ohio, to come to India to help save the women. She became the first missionary of the new society.

This society divides our whole country into eleven sections, called "Branches," the New England, New York, Philadelphia, Baltimore, Cincinnati, Northwestern, Des Moines, Minneapolis, Topeka, Pacific, and Columbia River "Branches." These have their own officers, raise their own funds, and send out their own missionaries. All the branches are represented in the General Executive which transacts the business of the Society.

The societies in the local churches are called "Auxiliaries." These are supplemented by the organizations of young people. At last report there were in all 17,809 organizations, with 617,553 members. The receipts for 1921 were \$2,264,634.



The society supports 648 missionaries in foreign fields. They labor in Africa, South America, Mexico, Italy, Bulgaria, Japan, India, Burma, Malaysia, Philippine Islands, China, and Korea.

2. *The Woman's Home Missionary Society.* No race of people were ever more desolate than the Negroes of our Southland at the close of the Civil War. It was to help the women of this needy race that the Woman's Home Missionary Society was organized in Cincinnati in 1880. Each Conference is supposed to have its Conference Society, and a local society is provided for each church. The young people are organized into "Mothers' Jewels," "Home Guards," and "Queen Esther Circles," according to age.

At last report the society had a membership of 428,159, and total receipts for the year were \$2,717,563.

The field of work for the society was quickly broadened until it included, not only the Negro women of the South, but Mormon women and Indian women, and finally needy classes of people of all kinds in every part of our land. By the ministry of its schools, industrial institutes, homes for girls, city mission centers, hospitals, work of deaconesses, and other agencies, the helpful hand of this society stretches to every part of our country.

Including deaconesses, the Society supports 1,073 workers in its many fields of Christlike ministry.

3. *Deaconess Work.* This is a recent agency in Methodism. It originated in our mission work in Germany in 1874. It began in this country with the establishment of the Deaconess Home in Chicago in 1887. The General Conference of 1888 recognized the work and established the office of deaconess in the church. A deaconess is consecrated to the work of visiting the sick, relieving the poor, caring for neglected children, instructing the back-

ward classes in better ways of life, and leading all classes to Christ. The deaconess wears a distinctive garb, which is well known and highly respected.

This work has grown until to-day there are reported 53 Deaconess Homes, located in our most important centers from coast to coast. There are also 26 Deaconess Hospitals in our country. There are 881 licensed deaconesses at work in the various fields, assisted by 142 probationers and 503 associate workers, a total force of 1,526 devoted women in a most beautiful Christlike service.

#### QUESTIONS

1. What conditions led to the organization of the Woman's Foreign Missionary Society?
2. Tell about the first missionary of this Society.
3. What led to the organization of the Woman's Home Missionary Society?
4. To what classes does the society now minister and how?
5. Tell all you can about deaconess work.

## CHAPTER XXIV

### SOME GREAT METHODIST AGENCIES

1. *Sunday School.* Methodism has an interesting record in establishing and promoting Sunday schools. As one enters Christ Church, Savannah, Georgia, he sees a brass tablet which reads: "To the glory of God, in memory of John Wesley, priest of the Church of England, Minister to Savannah 1736-1737. Founder of the Sunday School of the church. Erected by the Diocese of Georgia." This Sunday school is still going. It is forty-four years older than the Sunday school established by Robert Raikes in Gloucester, England, 1781, and usually accepted as the first Sunday school in the world.

With the exception of the school in Savannah, established by John Wesley, the first Sunday school of record in America was established by Bishop Asbury in Hanover County, Virginia, in 1786. The General Conference of 1790 gave official recognition to the Sunday school, and resolved, "Let us labor as the heart of one man to establish Sunday schools in or near the place of public worship."

This spirit of earnest endeavor to promote the Sunday school has been manifest throughout all the years of Methodist history. For this purpose the "Sunday School Union" was organized in 1827. To increase its efficiency the General Conference of 1908 changed its name to "The Board of Sunday Schools" and enlarged its sphere of work. Among our great Sunday-school leaders have been J. H. Vincent, J. L. Hurlbut, D. G. Downey, and Edgar Blake.

2. *The Epworth League.* For some time prior to 1889

there existed in the church five young people's societies of different names and plans of work. It was thought that a union of these into one society for the whole church was desirable. This was accomplished at the convention held in Cleveland, Ohio, May 14 and 15, 1889. The convention consisted of delegates from the Young People's Methodist Alliance, the Methodist Young People's Union, the Oxford League, the Young People's Christian League, and the Young People's Methodist Episcopal Alliance. The new organization was christened "The Epworth League." The General Conference of 1892 adopted the new organization, and its growth and usefulness has been phenomenal. The *Epworth Herald* arose as the official organ of the League, edited by J. F. Berry, and soon passed the 100,000 mark in circulation. In 1904 J. F. Berry was elected bishop, and S. J. Herben became editor of the *Herald*. He was succeeded in 1912 by Dan B. Brummitt. The following have served as General Secretaries of the League: E. A. Schell, W. P. Thirkield, E. M. Randall, W. F. Sheridan, and C. E. Guthrie.

3. *The Junior League*. When the Epworth League was organized, provision was also made for the boys and girls; a form of constitution, a charter, and a plan of work very similar to those for the Seniors were adopted for the Juniors. Those in charge very wisely adopted a system of grading and adapted the course of study to the different ages. Mrs. Annie E. Smiley served very successfully as the first General Secretary of Junior League, and was followed by Miss Emma A. Robinson, who brought to her task great efficiency as leader of the Junior Army. The *Junior Worker's Quarterly* and the *Epworth Herald* are the official organs of the Junior League.

4. *Hospitals*. In 1881 it was truly said that the Meth-

odist Episcopal Church was "without a hospital or even a bed in a hospital." In 1887, through the liberality of George I. Seney, who gave \$410,000 for the purpose, the Methodist Episcopal Hospital of Brooklyn was opened—the first of the denomination. In this hospital there are 275 beds and more than 12,000 patients are treated annually. Value of property, \$2,370,000.

The Methodist Episcopal Hospital of Philadelphia was opened in 1892, with property valued at \$570,000. This was made possible through the generous gift of Scott Stewart, M.D., who left a large part of his estate for this purpose. The property is now valued at \$1,000,000. Besides the above, Methodist hospitals have been established at Washington, Cincinnati, Saint Louis, Kansas City, and, in fact, in most of the large cities of the country. They now number 71, have 5,107 beds for patients, and employ 1,707 nurses.

5. *Schools.* Methodism from the beginning realized the importance of schools and the education of its people. Wesley, in the very year from which Methodism dates, 1739, founded the school at Kingswood, England. At the Christmas Conference, 1784, when the church was organized in America, steps were taken to build Cokesbury College—named for the two bishops—at Abingdon, Maryland. This was done in 1785. It was soon destroyed by fire, but out of its ashes arose a multitude of others. Within a year Asbury planned an academy for each Conference territory.

Our schools now number 130, with 51,190 students in the United States. In foreign fields we have 2,827 schools of all grades with 116,000 students.

6. *The Methodist Book Concern.* The history of our Book Concern is a wonder story. It originated in Philadelphia in 1789, where John Dickins began the publi-

cation of Methodist Hymnals. The Conference that year appointed him "Book Steward," and he loaned the Concern \$600, its first capital, to begin business. Its first catalogue contained only twenty-eight books, and they were all reprints—the crop of Methodist authors had not come on. Our country was then largely a wilderness, without railroads or steamboats. In 1804 the Concern was moved to New York.

In 1820 the Western Methodist Book Concern was started in Cincinnati. The first number of *The Christian Advocate* appeared September 9, 1826, with Barber Badger, a layman, as editor. In 1836 the New York house was entirely destroyed by fire, but was quickly rebuilt. The Concern now has main offices at New York and Cincinnati, and depositories or branch offices at Chicago, Boston, Pittsburgh, Detroit, Kansas City, and San Francisco. The successors to John Dickins have shown themselves well adapted to their work.

Dickins's catalogue of twenty-eight books has grown to more than three thousand, and the \$600 borrowed capital has become a real capital of more than \$7,000,000. In 1789 the Concern had one employee; now it gives employment to over 800. In 1789 it used 750 pounds of paper; last year the number was eleven millions. In 1792 it gave out of its earnings to retired preachers \$266; last year it distributed \$400,000.

The task of the Book Concern is to furnish books, papers, and periodicals for the Methodist world—a big task well performed.

## 7. SUMMARY OF WORLD-WIDE METHODISM

Members

In the United States Methodism has 16 branches with..7,950,809  
 In Canada Methodism has 2 branches with.....387,421  
 In Europe Methodism has 5 branches with.....1,269,482



In Japan Methodism has 1 branch with.....20,000  
 In Australasia Methodism has 2 branches with.....204,395  
 As a total for the world Methodism has 26 branches with..9,832,107

# QUESTIONS

1. What has been Methodism's relation to the Sunday school?
2. Tell all you can about the Epworth League and the Junior League.
3. Tell us about Methodist hospitals and Methodist schools.
4. Tell the story of our Book Concern.
5. Give number of branches and members in world-wide Methodism.









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